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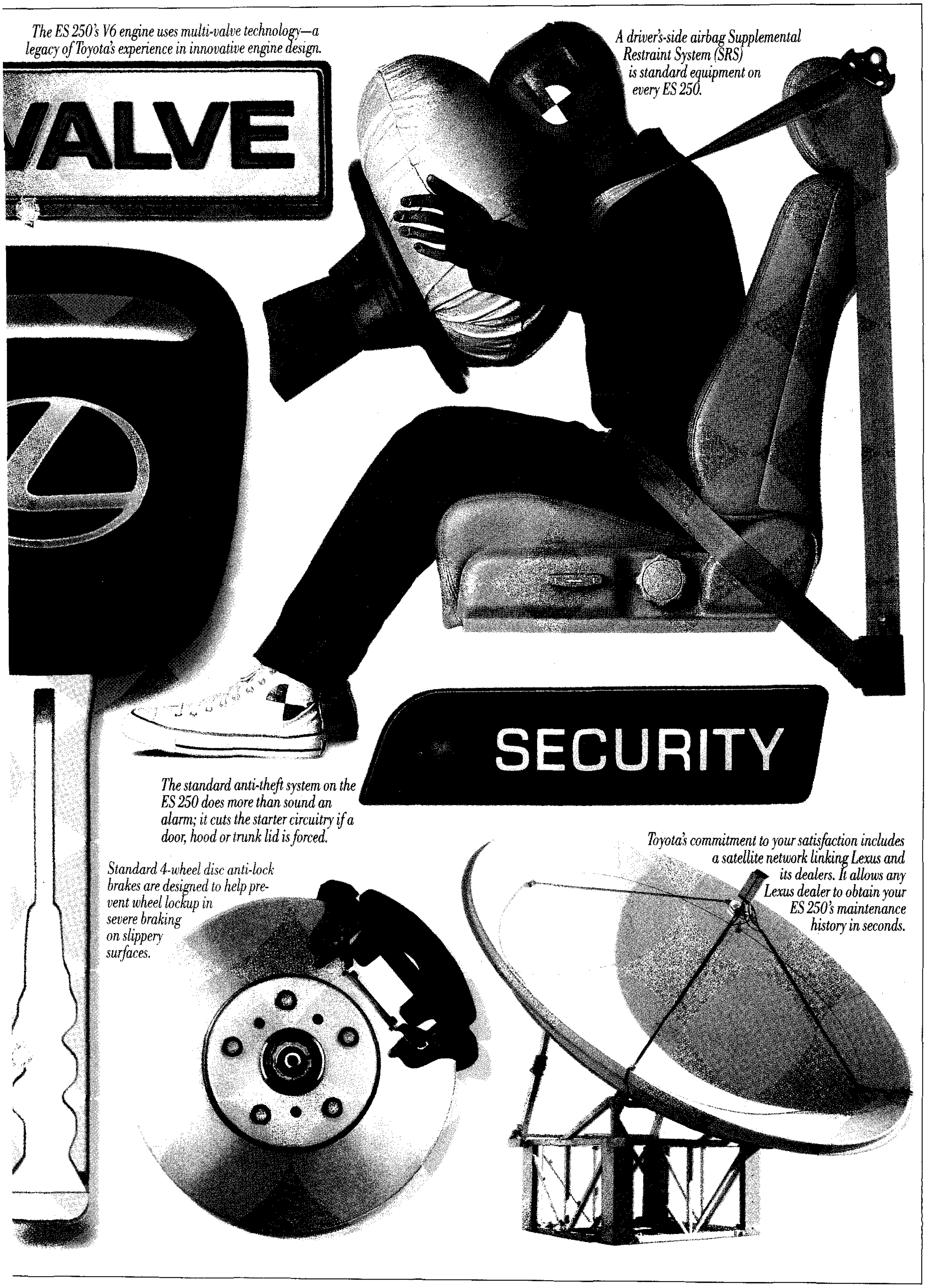

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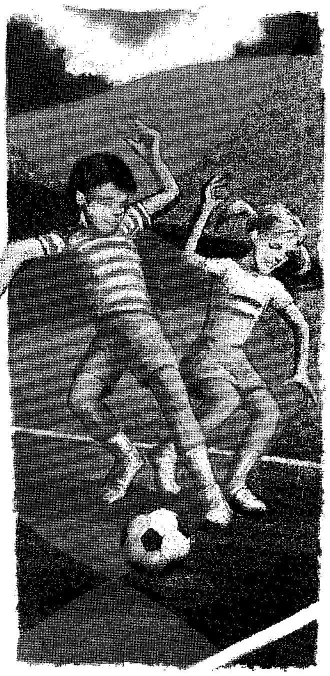

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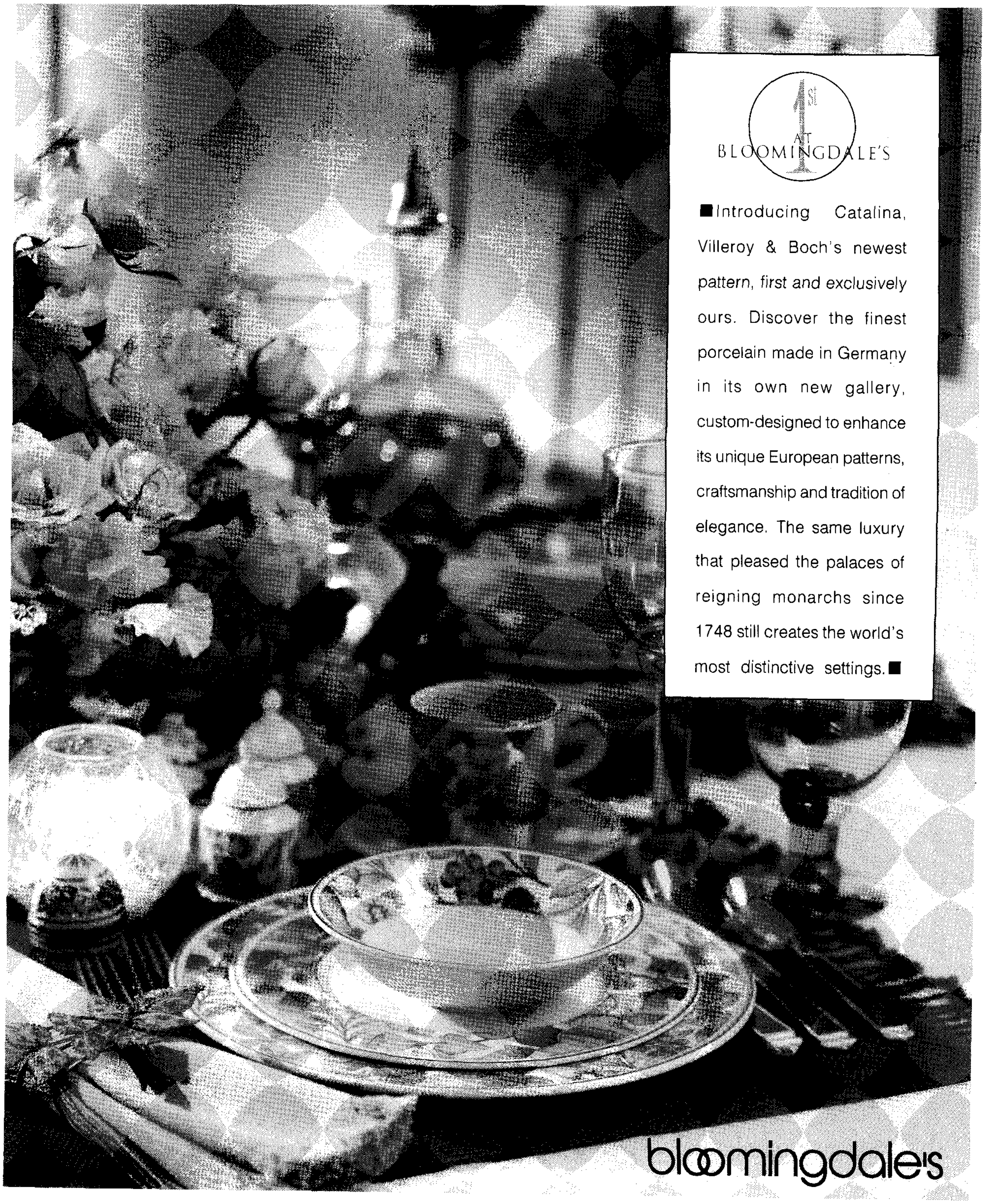

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

FOR the talent competition in "Pageant," the beauty-contest parody now at the Blue Angel, Miss Texas (Russell Garrett) taps across the stage as if molasses had been smeared on his heels. Luckily, the associations his appearance elicits come faster. He twirls a lasso quicker than Keith Carradine, and fills out his red-white-and-blue singlet à la Myra Breckinridge. The pistols parked at his sides suggest a Southwestern waitress ready to spill shots of tequila. And just when you think he's exhausted your fund of references a cardboard cutout of Ann Miller pops up stage right and you think, Of course! You don't mind when Garrett shoots off the figure's wig. Like pageants themselves, the hair's an obvious target, and, besides, Ann Miller is incapable of losing her dignity. As our companion whispered, unable to dance she'd be the right kind of pathetic.

The musical's aim isn't always as sharp as Mr. Garrett's. Although the casting of men as contestants is defensible (why use women when you can see them in these roles with depressing frequency on TV?), the show rarely addresses directly the sexism of beauty pageants, not even in an appropriately fun-poking way. It doesn't quite fulfill our criterion for truly successful parody: to be more ruthless than the thing being caricatured. And the decision to mount the show at a midtown supper club—where a waiter was overheard berating a waitress, "Drambuie's not a cocktail, it's a *liqueur*!"—rather than at a downtown B.Y.O.B. spot such as La Mama is unfortunate. Why bother going, then? Chiefly to see Randl Ash, who plays Miss Bible Belt. With his pert blond locks and baby-blue evening gown, he's a dead ringer for Lorna Luft, as well as being the only one of the six contestants who's totally believable as a woman. The fact that he wasn't crowned queen at the performance we attended—the winner changes every night, and selected audience members act as judges—was the show's truest travesty.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

Breaking Legs—Philip Bosco and Vincent Gardenia have the leads in a new comedy by Tom Dulack. John Tillinger directed. Previews through May 18. Opens May 19 at 7. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

Casanova—A new play by Constance Congdon, directed by Michael Greif. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Charge It, Please—A comedy by Carlos Gorbea. Three performances a week are in English; four are in Spanish. Previews begin May 15. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293.)

Ensemble Studio Theatre—The 1991 festival of one-act plays opens on May 15 at 8, with performances of "Naomi in the Living Room," by Christopher Durang; "Where Were You When It Went Down," by David Mamet; "You Can't Trust the Male," by Randy Noojin; "Intimacy," adapted from a Raymond Carver story by Harris Yulin; and "A Way with Words," by Frank D. Gilroy. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-3405.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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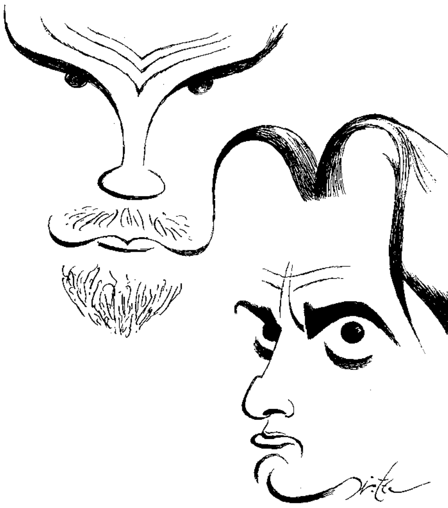
19	20	21	22			

Fayebird—A new play by Diana Amsterdam, presented by the American Jewish Theatre. Previews through May 18. Opens May 19 at 7. (Susan Bloch, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797.)

Food and Shelter—Kelly Coffield heads the cast of a new play by Jane Anderson. Directed by André Ernotte. Previews begin May 16. (Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874.)

Fridays—A 1981 play by Andrew Johns, with Henderson Forsythe and John Peakes. Presented by the Riverside Shakespeare Company and directed by Gus Kaikkonen. Preview on May 15. Opens May 16 at 8. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)



John Malkovich and Sam Shepard ("States of Shock")

The Hunchback of Notre Dame—Everett Quinton's new show, which is billed as "a quasimusical." Preview on May 15. Opens May 16 at 8. (Charles Ludlam, 1 Sheridan Square. 691-2271.)

Letters to a Student Revolutionary—A play by Elizabeth Wong, presented by the Pan Asian Repertory Theatre. Preview on May 14. Opens May 15 at 8. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660.)

Mr. Gogol and Mr. Preen—A new comedy by Elaine May, with William H. Macy, Mike Nussbaum, and Zohra Lampert. Directed by Gregory Mosher. In previews. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Night Sky—A play by Susan Yankowitz, presented by the Women's Project. Joseph Chaikin directed. Previews through May 21. Opens May 22 at 8. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 768-4334.)

Song of Singapore—A musical by Erik Frandsen, Michael Garin, Robert Hipkens, Paula Lockheart, and Allan Katz, which is set in a Singapore night club in 1941. In previews. (17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 228-0844.)

States of Shock—A new play by Sam Shepard, starring John Malkovich. Bill Hart was the director. Previews May 14-15. Opens May 16 at 7:30, and runs through June 2. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074.)

The Subject Was Roses—John Mahoney, Dana Ivey, and Patrick Dempsey in a revival of the 1964 play by Frank D. Gilroy. Directed by Jack Hofsiss. Previews begin May 15. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883.)

The Way of the World—A modern-dress version of Congreve's play, directed by David Greenspan. Previews through May 19. Opens May 21 at a time to be announced. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

NEW THIS SEASON

Advice from a Caterpillar—The brat-pack actress Ally Sheedy is perfectly awful in this rather effortful comedy by Douglas Carter Beane. Mr. Beane is the stage doorman uptown at the Neil Simon Theatre (in case you want to stick your head in). Despite some nifty work by Harley Venton, Dennis Christopher, and David Lansbury—and solid direction from David's father, Edgar—the evening is not a great success. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/15/91.) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

And the World Goes 'Round: The Songs of Kander & Ebb—A musical revue, with Bob Cuccioli, Karen Mason, Brenda Pressley, Jim Walton, and Karen Ziëmba. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 246-0102.)

Black Eagles—Leslie Lee's play about the Tuskegee Airmen, black flyers during the Second World War who were trained to escort bombers manned by white pilots and who were eventually allowed to become bomber pilots themselves, seems at first to be just a random set of scenes, but the pressure of emotion underneath gives the drama force and coherence. With Graham Brown, Reggie Montgomery, and David Rainey, among other good actors. The show was conceived and directed by Ricardo Khan. (5/6/91) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Closes May 19.)

Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story—Anyone who thinks that rock and roll lives on had better steer clear of this ersatz docu-musical about the life of Buddy Holly. (11/19/90) (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Closes May 19.)

Circle Repertory Company—Presenting **walking the dead,** a new play by Keith Curran. Scotty Bloch, Ashley Gardner, Joe Mantello, Christopher Shaw, Cotter Smith, Myra Taylor, and Tyrone Wilson make up the cast. (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100. Closes June 2.)

Colette Collage: Two Musicals About Colette—A new work by Tom Jones (book and lyrics) and Harvey Schmidt (music). Presented by Musical Theatre Works. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 688-6022. Closes May 19.)

Daugherty & Field Off-Broadway—The cabaret team of Bill Daugherty and Robin Field in a revue of swing and show tunes. (Double Image, 15 Vandam St. 924-1120.)

Fiddler on the Roof—The Israeli actor Topol makes a commanding Tevye—the best of all of them—in this production, which falls somewhere between revival and facsimile. The songs are by Bock and Harnick; the dances and staging are re-created from the Jerome Robbins originals; and the costumes are from the Patricia Zipprodt originals. (12/3/90) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510.)

The Good Times Are Killing Me—The cartoonist Lynda Barry devised this memory play of words and pop tunes about a racially mixed neighborhood. At the heart of it is the friendship between two little girls, one white, the other black, who are delightfully portrayed by Angela Goethals and Chandra Wilson. The undercurrent of serious comment on race doesn't add much, but every humorous scene scores a bull's-eye. Also with Kim Staunton, Wendell Pierce, and Holly Felton. Mark Brokaw directed. (5/6/91) (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

Gypsy—The Tyne Daly-led revival of the Laurents-Styne-Sondheim musical returns to Broadway. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

The Haunted Host—Harvey Fierstein and Jason Workman star in a revival of Robert Patrick's 1964 play. "Pouf Positive," a new comedy by Mr. Patrick, is the curtain-raiser. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226. Closes June 2.)

I Hate Hamlet—In Paul Rudnick's jokey farce, Nicol Williamson gives a stunning comedy performance as the ghost of John Barrymore, summoned to aid a young Hollywood actor who has been booked to play Hamlet in the Park. Mr. Williamson is ably supported by some of the other actors, but the show boils down to a marvellous solo turn. (4/22/91) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022.)

Ivy Rowe—Barbara Bates Smith in a one-woman show adapted from Lee Smith's novel "Fair

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and Tender Ladies." Directed by Mark Hunter. (Provincetown, 133 Macdougal St. 477-5048.)

Jackie Mason: Brand New—The comedian brings his one-man show to Broadway again. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)

Jean Cocteau Repertory—Presenting three plays in rotating repertory: Shakespeare's **JULIUS CAESAR** (through May 19) and a double bill of Georg Büchner's **WOYZECK** and **LEONCE AND LENA** (through May 18). (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

Lost in Yonkers—There's not one glimmer of honesty or authenticity in this family melodrama by Neil Simon. Set in Yonkers during the Second World War, it's about what happens when a cowering, pathetic man has to leave his two adolescent sons with his intimidating mother for the better part of a year. (3/11/91) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

Miss Saigon—Oh, the horror! The horror! (4/29/91) (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.)

Monster in a Box—A quick return engagement of Spalding Gray's latest autobiographical monologue. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. May 19-20 and May 26-27.)

The Old Boy—A play by A. R. Gurney, with Stephen Collins. Directed by John Rubinstein. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Once on This Island—A musical by Lynn Ahrens (book and lyrics) and Stephen Flaherty (score), which is based on Rosa Guy's 1985 novel, "My Love, My Love." (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Only the Truth Is Funny—The comedian Rick Reynolds' one-man show. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 246-0102.)

Our Country's Good—A play by Timberlake Wertenbaker, set in eighteenth-century Australia. Produced here under the auspices of the Broadway Alliance; directed by Mark Lamos. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 307-4100.)

Pageant—A musical spoof of beauty contests. Book and lyrics by Bill Russell and Frank Kelly and music by Albert Evans. Conceived and directed by Robert Longbottom. (Blue Angel, 321 W. 44th St. 262-3333.)

Penn & Teller's Refrigerator Tour—The heavenly twain meet again. The new tricks are just as mysterious (and frightening) as the old ones. As for the tricksters, their bogus candor is intact, and they've never been funnier. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.)

Remembrance—A play by Graham Reid, with Aideen O'Kelly and Henry J. Quinn. Directed by Terence Lamude. (Irish Arts, 553 W. 51st St. 307-7171. Closes May 19.)

The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui—John Turturro and David Patrick Kelly star in a production of Brecht's play. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210. Closes June 2.)

A Room of One's Own—Eileen Atkins is sublime in this stage adaptation of the Virginia Woolf essay. Easily the most civilized entertainment on offer, this one-woman show is something every lively-minded young woman above the age of fifteen—fourteen if she's particularly lively-minded—will want to see. (3/18/91) (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

The Secret Garden—Mandy Patinkin and Daisy Eagan lead the cast of a new musical based on the Frances Hodgson Burnett classic. Marsha Norman wrote the book and the lyrics, and Lucy Simon provided the score. Susan H. Schulman directed. (5/13/91) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 246-0102.)

The Stick Wife—A play by Darrah Cloud, set in the sixties, about the wives of three Birmingham Klansmen. With Michael Countryman, Lindsay Crouse, Lanny Flaherty, Murphy Guyer, Margo Martindale, and Julie White. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Closes May 19.)

The Substance of Fire—Ron Rifkin gives an impeccable performance as a publisher—a refugee from Nazi Germany—whose difficulties with his grown children are no greater than those with himself. The play, by Jon Robin Baitz, is not flawless, but it is consistently absorbing and very well acted, under the direction of Daniel Sullivan. With Sarah Jessica Parker, Patrick Breen, Jon Tenney, and Maria Tucci. (4/1/91) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

The Sum of Us—David Stevens' poignant comedy about how hard it is for parents and children to break free of each other (particularly if they get on too well) is set in present-day Australia. Depending on how you look at it, the play is either very dear and rather flawed or rather dear and very flawed. (11/5/90) (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

The Will Rogers Follies—The sets of Tony Walton, the direction and choreography of Tommy Tune, the costumes of Willa Kim, and the row upon row of Ziegfeld girls make a feast for the eyes, but the funny bone and heart are somewhat neglected. Keith Carradine makes an engaging, amusing Rogers, but that is not enough for an engrossing evening, despite Cy Coleman's pleasant score. (5/13/91) (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.)

LONG RUNS

CATS: Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **CITY OF ANGELS:** Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run turned thirty-one this month. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1991:** A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **FOREVER PLAID:** Stuart Ross's loving tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.) . . . **GRAND HOTEL:** The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show, but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-0102.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY:** Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York corporate raider's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **PRELUDE TO A KISS:** Craig Lucas's entertaining romantic comedy slips into fantasy when an old man kisses a bride at her wedding. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450.) . . . **SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION:** You're best off knowing nothing about the John Guare play other than that it represents a perfect meeting of the playwright, director Jerry Zaks, and actress Stockard Channing. Out of a true story—one apparently about celebrity and Good Samaritanism—Guare has fashioned a wistful comedy about race, class, money, imagination, collective conscience, individual psyche, and the impulse toward art. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.) . . . **SMOKE ON THE MOUNTAIN:** This loving satire of old-time gospel music, set in 1938, is perfectly delightful. Written by Connie Ray, it recreates a Saturday-night service at a small church in rural North Carolina, where a family of gospel singers have been invited to appear. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

DANCE

THIS past winter, a company of Japanese dancers appeared at Columbia University in a performance of gagaku—the ancient male classical dance form of the imperial household. We were fascinated to discover in their movement certain irresistible reminders of a work that is currently in City Ballet's repertory: Balanchine's 1963 "Bugaku," whose official inspiration was a troupe of gagaku performers which Balanchine had observed several years earlier. At Columbia, we saw "dances for the left"—that is, dances in which the soloist enters from the audience's left side of the stage—and "dances for the right." In the Balanchine work, the strict spatial division is retained, but it is dramatized by assigning the left to male entrances and the right to female. At Columbia, we also saw a virtuosic number for a solo warrior carrying a long spear, which he manipulated to an increasingly suspenseful, adagio-like effect. In "Bugaku" there is a sinuous pas de deux for the central couple, in which the spectacular extensions of the ballerina's limbs suggest instruments that are now propelled by obedience to a master, now impelled by their own intrinsic will.

What is it like to be inside "Bugaku," so theatrically pungent yet emotionally refined? We asked Allegra Kent, the ballerina for whom Balanchine fashioned the starring role and who remains indissolubly associated with it. She linked her role to other parts she had performed in the Balanchine repertory, like the girl in "The Unanswered Question" section of "Ivesiana" and the title figure of "La Sonnambula"—both remote figures clothed in white. For Miss Kent, spontaneity and momentary invention are important in "Bugaku," and to help her bring them about she relied on the uncanny sensitivity of her partner, Edward Villella, who, she explained, managed to support her while never interfering with her freedom.

As preparation for the role, Miss Kent went to see Japanese movies, "particularly the ones that took place in medieval times"—like Kurosawa's "Throne of Blood" and "Rashomon"—"so I could watch the women's idiosyncrasies and legato style," she said. "I approached 'Bugaku' with a straightforward fanaticism and a kind of wariness," she continued. "As far as technique goes, people think of me as being very lithe, but it's not so much that I was supple as that I gave the illusion of elasticity. I used to tell dancers I coached in the lead that the steps in 'Bugaku' were easy, but, really, after dancing it I would be exhausted by the energy needed to keep that kind of magic moving."

When you're traveling abroad, it's nice to hear a familiar voice.

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DANCE—Cont'd

New York City Ballet—May 14 at 8: "Bugaku," "Mozartiana," and "Stravinsky Violin Concerto." . . . ¶ May 15 at 8: "Concerto Barocco," "Fearful Symmetries," and "Dances at a Gathering." . . . ¶ May 16 at 8: "La Valse," "Other Dances," "Concertino," and "Stars and Stripes." . . . ¶ May 17 at 8: "Raymonda Variations," "The Cage," "Other Dances," and "Chaconne." . . . ¶ May 18 at 2: "Concerto Barocco," "Ives, Songs," and "Fearful Symmetries." . . . ¶ May 18 at 8: "Bugaku," "La Valse," and "Chaconne." . . . ¶ May 19 at 1: "Concerto Barocco," "The Cage," "Other Dances," and "Stars and Stripes." . . . ¶ May 19 at 7: "Raymonda Variations," "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," and "Dances at a Gathering." . . . ¶ May 21 at 8: "Concerto Barocco," "The Cage," "Four Gnossiennes," and "La Valse." . . . ¶ May 22 at 8: "Mozartiana," "Ives, Songs," and "Brahms/Handel." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through June 30.)

American Ballet Theatre—May 13-14 at 8 and May 15 at 2: "Coppélia." . . . ¶ May 15-16 at 8: "Ballet Imperial," "Pillar of Fire," and "Rodeo." . . . ¶ May 17 and May 20-21 at 8, and May 18 and May 22 at 2 and 8: "La Bayadère." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Through June 22.)

Jazz Tap Ensemble—A Los Angeles-based company, with guest artist Savion Glover. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. May 14-17 at 8, May 18 at 2 and 8, and May 19 at 2 and 7:30.)

J Fregalette Jansen Dance—Presenting a program of new works, including "The Extravagance of Laughter." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. May 16-19 at 8.)

Elizabeth Streb—With her company, Ringside, in a program including the première of "Wall." (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. May 16-18 at 8:30 and May 19 at 6.)

Pearl Lang Dance Theatre—In dances based on Yiddish and Sephardic poems and songs. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. May 19 at 3:30.)

Jane Comfort and Company—With guest artist Mark Dendy in "Deportment: Part I (South)" and the première of "Deportment: Part II (North)." (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. May 17-19 at 8.)

José Greco Company—Fifteen dancers, singers, and musicians from Madrid in the opening performances of a three-week engagement, which will run through June 9. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. May 21-22 at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

WILSON PHILLIPS and Vanilla Ice have been hovering in or around the Top Ten for an extraordinarily long time now—a testament not so much to their musicianship as to the record company they share, SBK, and its promotional campaigns, which have all the subtlety of saturation bombings. Now the brash, two-year-old company is launching a New York-bred pop singer named Francesca Beghè. SBK means to make Beghè a star or go broke trying.

Beghè—it's pronounced Ba-GAY—writes her own songs, and sings with an easy, resourceful, Carly Simonish voice. Her début album is being released this week. The song titles alone —"Something About Your Touch," "Hold Back the Night," "Let Your Spirit Fly"—suggest what kind of fare this is. One can already hear the drum machines, the splish-splashy keyboards, the overly tasteful guitar solos. On record, Beghè's pop is a touch too generic and tilts a little too close to Phil Collins for our taste, but we watched her perform at the Bottom Line recently and she made us think twice.

In concert, Beghè, who wore a Laura Ashley-style dress and a heavily zippered leather jacket, gave her songs a grittier, more jubilant cast. There's no doubt that this woman could front a rock-and-roll band, or that her restrained album doesn't reflect her brash, former-waitress spirit as well as it could. (The singer's promotional photo, in which she throws her head back erotically and gives herself a breast exam, is also well wide of the mark.) Beghè's confidence at the Bottom Line may have been partly due to the fact that nearly all of SBK was there to cheer her on. The company's staff had left a copy of her cassette on every seat—how's that for getting somebody's music heard?—and they were beaming as though they had made a real discovery. We're beginning to think they have.

The BoDeans at the Ritz

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Arthur's Tavern, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—A quirky, endearing Village watering hole, perpetually decorated for the holidays—all of them. The musicians work in the back of the room, in a well ringed by a bar—a setup that seems to bring out the latent show-biz tendencies in some of the bar's patrons. Tuesdays through Thursdays belong to Al Bundy, Fridays and Saturdays to Mabel Godwin, and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band. Music from nine-thirty.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A tony cabaret attained by passing through an opulent tapas restaurant, where wicker baskets overflow with fruit and vegetables and a row of hams hangs over the bar; if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. **MARNI NIXON**, a fine, precise soprano who's still best known for dubbing songs in "My Fair Lady," "West Side Story," and "The King and I," performs May 14-19, as well as every Sunday this month. Her show includes music by Hoagy Carmichael and Sheldon Harnick. **RITA MC KENZIE** starts up on May 21, with a show entitled "Call Me Ethel . . . Merman, That Is." Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven-fifteen.

Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—The jazz personnel turns over nearly every night at this airy, loftlike restaurant-bar, in the gray zone between Zabar's and Columbia. Some may cry gentrification at the sight of the pastel walls, the potted greenery, and the bar crowded with Frascati sippers, but the floor-to-ceiling windows make for some fine Broadway-viewing. The **MUNDELL LOWE** trio, which features bassist **RON CARTER** and drummer **AL FOSTER**, performs through May 18; the **FREDDIE REDD** trio begins work on May 20. Music from nine. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A jazz club that would be a perfect stop on a bus tour (there's even a souvenir shop that sells Kodak). It's a good idea to make a reservation and show up well in advance. The Seattle-based pop-jazz vocalist-pianist **DIANE SCHUUR** claims May 14-19. **CARMEN MC RAE**, one of the foremost jazz and scat singers around, begins a visit on May 21. Last year, Ms. McRae, who lives on the West Coast and only occasionally makes the trek east, came out with a well-received album of Thelonious Monk tunes with words by various lyricists. First set at nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. The walls and columns are basic black with some rainbow detailing here and there—the place looks a little like the outside of a van. If you end up without a seat, you can stand at the bar—finally a club where they don't force you to drink—and mull over photographs from great shows you've missed. Faux lounge lizard **BUSTER POINDEXTER** reigns on May 15, with the Banshees of Blue. A program called Idiot's Delight, featuring **ROCKAPELLA**, among others, takes place on May 18. Show times vary. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar in the heart of N.Y.U. country. It's advisable to get all your talking done between sets, because once the first chord is struck the audience here—with a little help from the management—becomes as quiet as a church congregation. Bassist **CHRISTIAN MC BRIDE**, pianist **CYRUS CHESTNUT**, and drummer **KENNY WASHINGTON** are on the premises through May 18. Pianist **JAMES WILLIAMS**, guitarist **CALVIN NEWBORN**, and bassist **IRA COLEMAN** commence on May 20. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

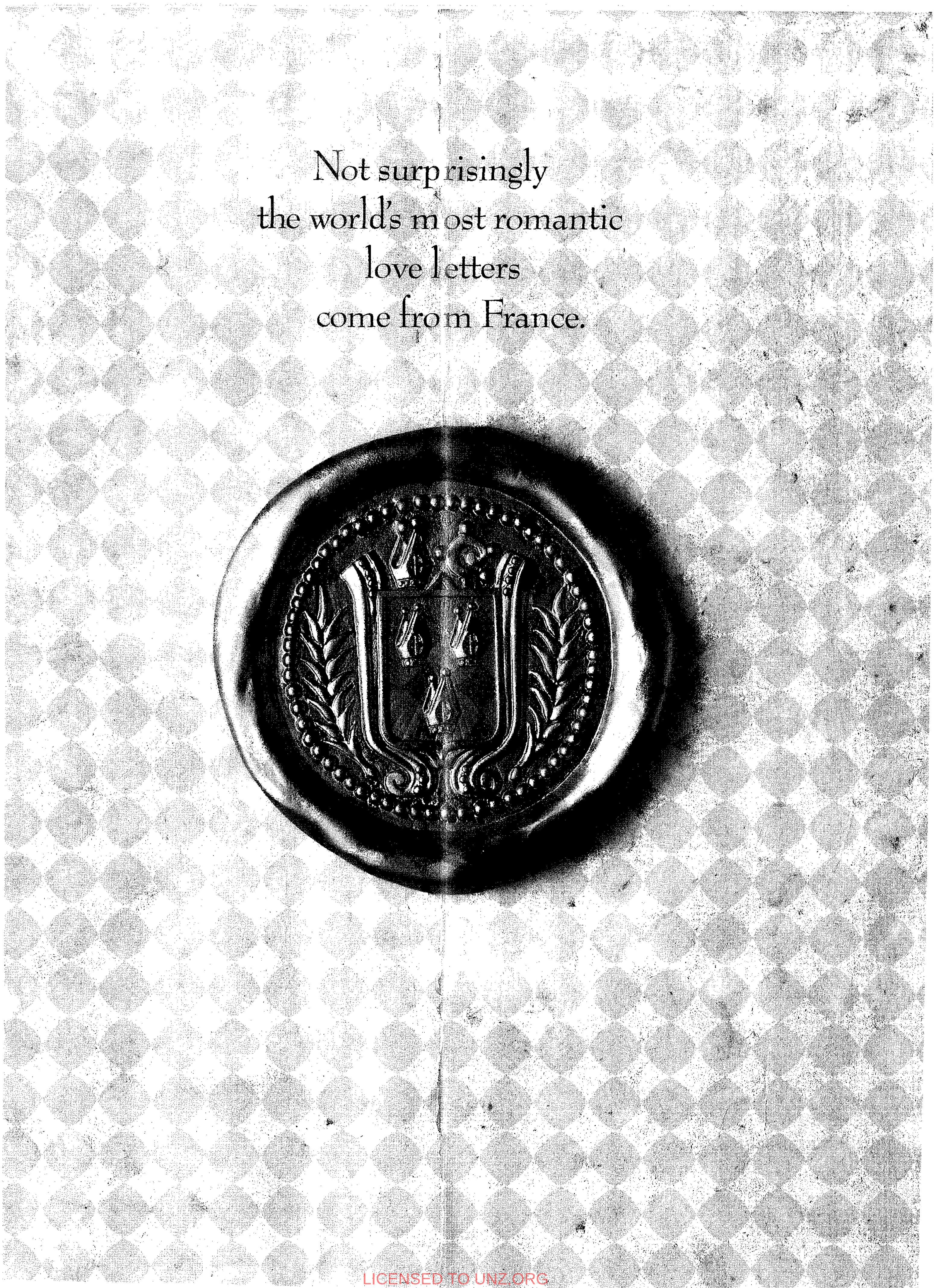
Café Sin-é, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—An unpretentious storefront café devoted to such things as Irish stew and the *Irish Times*. There's no stage per se, but bohemian musicians gather around a piano and work up some wistful sets while bohemian patrons sit writing in journals, rolling cigarettes, or lingering over one of the two varieties of beer sold here: Budweiser and Rolling Rock. Music generally begins at about eight-thirty.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and singer-pianist **BOBBY SHORT**, who has been a fixture in this room since he first set foot in it, in 1968. Sets at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans' Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Cat Club, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—Bell-bottoms and peace signs aren't the only nostalgia craze in town: at the Cat Club on Sunday nights, the nineteen-thirties are in vogue. On other nights of the week, the club attracts a scruffy leather-and-lace crowd, but Sundays belong to the Swing Dance Society, whose passion is the Lindy Hop, a dance named after Charles Lindbergh. The dancers are young and old, graceful and flat-footed; the drink of choice is the Swing Dance Punch; the staff looks alternately bemused and bewildered by the genteel crowd. The **ROY GERSON SWING BAND** holds sway on May 19. Music from eight to midnight.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Still standing. In the late seventies and early eighties, this dark cave (graffitied walls, a battered pool table, rest rooms for the intrepid only) was the hub of a thriving punk-music scene. Other clubs of the era have fizzled, but CB's perseveres, and young hopefuls continue to fill the stage nightly. Music from eight on Sundays and Mondays, from eight-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from nine-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

Condon's, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—A snug, candlelit catacomb just east of Union Square. The virtuosic soprano **MORGANA KING** is on hand May 14-19; the **GEORGE MRAZ** quintet takes hold on May 21. Music after nine.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love letters
come from France.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Continental Divide, 25 Third Ave., at St. Marks Pl. (529-6924)—Hipsters, posers, N.Y.U. students, the occasional skinhead—a typical East Village bar. The motif is prehistoric punk—a Stone Age mural, assorted toy dinosaurs and pterodactyls—and on peak nights there's a take-no-prisoners atmosphere. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at ten, Fridays and Saturdays at eleven.

Delta 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—A pleasant hangout for white-collar trash, where you'll find cold Dixie beer, collard greens, and plenty of men who know how to wear a leather vest. As if that weren't enough, the place also features a corrugated-tin ceiling and a truckload of sort-of-Southern items: a photo booth, a giant Amoco sign, an Evel Knievel lunchbox. Most nights, the buffet turns into a bandstand at nine.

Eagle Tavern, 355 W. 14th St. (924-0275)—An Irish pub in the meat-packing district, not too far from the boondocks. In the front room, barbirds growl about one thing or another, and in the back room another crowd listens to Irish folk musicians (on Fridays) and native string bands (on Saturdays). **MORNING STAR** performs on May 17; **HARRY BOLICK AND TUNESMITH** come in on May 18.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—If submarines had jazz clubs, they might look like this basement haunt, which is reached by passing through a tight corridor where you half expect to bump into Admiral Nimitz. This is not the place for those with a fear of intimacy: at the front tables you can go eye to eye with your favorite performers, and no matter where you're seated there's not much room to practice your T'ai Chi. **MICHEL CAMILO,** a composer-pianist from the Dominican Republic, performs through May 19. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

Gonzalez y Gonzalez, 625 Broadway, at Houston St. (473-8787)—Loud, brash, and big. The theme is, of course, Mexican, and you get the whole enchilada—a giant cactus here, a parade-float sombrero there, animal skulls, religious artifacts, and chili-pepper clusters everywhere. The stage is in the rear, about a city block from the entrance. Music Wednesdays through Saturdays from ten.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A vaguely old-fashioned restaurant-and-bar that usually has a boisterous, happy-hour air. Pianist **JOHN HICKS** is here May 15-18 (his companions will vary slightly); **JUDY CARMICHAEL,** who plays a fine stride piano, and saxophonist **MIKE HASHIM** start up on May 22. Music from nine-forty-five.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—Situated in a neighborhood that boasts the Puck Building to the west and a host of windshield washers to the east, this modest space provides a forum for free-thinking musicians. Beat and melody are optional, "music" and "noise" relative terms. A few of this week's highlights: the Ohio-based all-female rock band **SCRAWL** on May 15; **NED ROTHENBERG'S DOUBLE BAND** on May 16; and **HUGO LARGO** May 17-18. Music after nine.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (1-201 798-4064)—A small-pond club for big-fish bands. There's not much here to look at: it's a back-room affair with a dingy stage and a baby grand someone apparently tried to cover with papier-mâché. Still, the bookers know their college-radio playlists. The country, blues, and folk quartet **MUMBO GUMBO** performs on May 17; **SCRAWL** is here on May 18. Shows at ten on Thursdays, and at eleven on Fridays and Saturdays.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Where you can always smell the stogies. Jelly Roll Morton—whose business card billed him as the "creator of ragtime" and to whom is attributed the famous remark "I invented jazz in 1902"—and his Red Hot Peppers are the subject of a celebration here just now. For anyone needing a refresher course on the late pianist's work, RCA recently released an exhaustive multi-disk set of his Victor recordings, and Marcus Roberts tipped his hat Morton's way a couple of times on his latest record, "Alone with Three Giants." Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Closed Sundays.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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SOFT THRILLS

If you don't feel like trekking out to Coney Island this summer, you can find a modest version of the same entertainment right here in Manhattan, at Victory Park. The park, which officially inaugurates its first season in the city on May 17 (though it has been open for a few weeks now), sits on Pier 84, on the West Side Highway at 44th Street, sandwiched between the aircraft carrier Intrepid and the entrance to the Circle Line. (The pier will soon be home to an outdoor concert stage called the Patriot Arena.) Victory Park's roller coaster isn't likely to induce squeals comparable to those brought forth by Coney Island's mighty Cyclone, and the park doesn't offer the kind of rides that rearrange your internal organs and send your stomach flying up to your throat. The amusements here—a giant slide, an Autorodeo (bumper cars), spaceships and motorcycles that spin around well within the speed limit—seem to be geared more toward kids and timid adults than toward hardened thrill seekers.

The park also features an arcade, where there are balloons to be popped, water guns to be squirted, and stuffed animals to be won. And for horror fans there's the Nightmare Castle, a house of evil that is negotiated by a cart ride. A few evenings ago, the castle's proprietor/operator dared two young boys to enter. "I can guarantee you that when you come out you'll be shaking," he promised. After getting the O.K. sign from their dad, the boys allowed themselves to be strapped into a cart; they tumbled into the dark entrance and, a few minutes later, emerged from the other side. "How was it?" their father asked. "Scary," they said, politely. The proprietor, who seemed to sense that they didn't fully appreciate the horror of what they had just witnessed, ventured, "I forgot to tell you—Jason is in there."

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A great, pricey cabaret in the sky. Singer **MAUREEN MC GOVERN,** who begins a stint here on May 14, was once known (to her consternation) as "the disaster-theme queen"—she sang "The Morning After," from "The Poseidon Adventure," as well as songs from "Towering Inferno" and "Superman." Since then, Ms. McGovern, who has a powerful, versatile four-octave voice, has made a different kind of name for herself, as a cabaret singer. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A place where a fella and a gal can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS,** a swellegant big band that re-creates the look and sound of a thirties outfit, and that seems to know every song written between the Armistice and D-Day, is here every Tuesday, from eight-thirty. Other show times vary.

Ritz, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—The atmosphere in this dark, hollowed-out theatre varies depending on what kind of crowd a given band attracts—some audiences are of the swaying, thoughtful variety, and others are the frenetic, stage-diving kind. The bookings here tend to fluctuate wildly as well. Two upcoming shows stand out, however: the **BO DEANS** and the **GEAR DADDIES** will be here on May 17; and the **DIVINYLS** appear on May 20. Show times vary.

Rodeo Bar, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—A Western theme bar, attached to a Mexican restaurant. You get walls designed to simulate a log cabin; a buffalo head that blows smoke through its nostrils; a horse trailer that's been converted into a bar; peanuts for eating and, occasionally, throwing. But wait, there's more: a TV that plays tapes of rodeos; New Mexico memorabilia; and live music nightly—country, blues, folk, rock, hillbilly. Music begins at ten-thirty.

Russian Tea Room, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—Known for, among countless other things, a scene in "Manhattan" in which Woody Allen tries to teach his young son how to score. Last fall, after a long slumber, the Tea Room's small, red-gold-and-green cabaret reopened with a series of performances. **RICHARD RODNEY BENNETT** performs on May 19. Shows Sundays at eight and, depending on demand, ten-thirty. Dining.

Spo-dee-o-dee, 565 W. 23rd St., at Eleventh Ave. (206-1990)—A night club in a part of Chelsea the real-estate agents don't show you. It's a modest-sized space with a dance floor, a stage (there's live music seven nights a week), and pell-mell décor: Victorian-style chandeliers, movie-theatre drapes, murals of Cotton Club-era dancers. At peak hours (late), you'll get an eyeful of waves, perms, teased and sprayed locks, lip gloss, pumps, fishnets, fringed jackets, leather pants, and designer-outlet new-wave apparel.

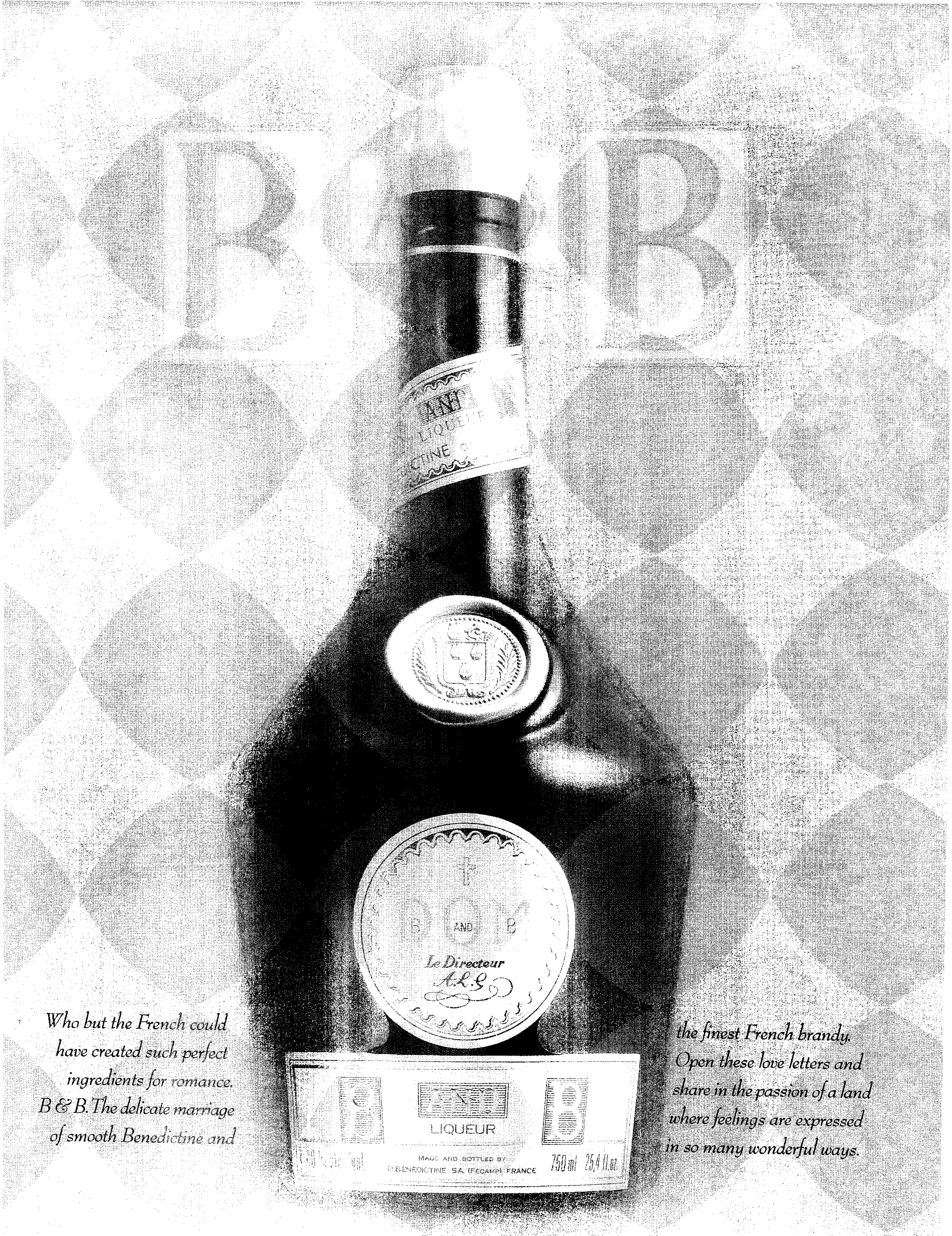
Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. Cornettist **NAT ADDERLEY** directs his sextet May 14-19; the **RALPH MOORE** quintet gets under way on May 21. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter Miles Evans is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

Sweetwaters, 170 Amsterdam Ave., at 67th St. (873-4100)—Pink carnations on the tables, shrimp creole on the menu, a sunken dance floor with a "Saturday Night Fever" ball, and a house photographer who offers to take a picture of you and your companion. The stage, dominated by a white grand piano, is usually given over to soul and R. & B.; the audience shouts encouragement as the band sings about "doin' it all night long" and "takin' care of that thang." There's a lively bar, too, separated from the dining room by tinted glass. The vocal trio of Ray, Goodman, & Brown performs here May 16-18 at nine and eleven.

Tramps, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Located on a Chelsea block that's like an urban Disneyland (Chelsea Billiards, an indoor miniature-golf course, a trendy all-night diner, Limelight around the corner), this roller-rink-size bar-and-restaurant is a lot bigger and a lot slicker than the old Tramps, but the emphasis on solid rock and blues remains. **MICHELLE WRIGHT** and **GEORGE FOX** perform on May 16. Show times vary.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The late Max Gordon, who opened this holiest of jazz shrines in 1935, once described the club's early patrons as a mix of "poets, W.P.A. writers, hustlers, broads on the make, and moochers." The **JACKIE MC LEAN** quintet is in swing through May 19; the brilliant, iconoclastic pianist **DOROTHY DONEGAN** leads a trio as of May 21. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays. Music after nine-thirty.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—One of those snazzy, awninged eateries you've seen nestled amid brownstones in the Village and always wondered about. Pianist **JOHN BUNCH** and bassist **DENNIS IRWIN** perform through May 18; pianist **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and bassist **CECIL MC BEE** kick off on May 20. Music from eight.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EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

Whoever invented the V.I.P. room deserves his own circle in hell, for no matter how exclusive a club opening is, how selective the promoters are in handing out free-drink tickets, or how many new rooms there are to explore, there is always a bunch who just won't be satisfied unless they get to go where everyone else can't.

For most of those invited to Danceteria's inaugural ball, it was enough to rediscover the club, appearing in its third incarnation (one more than the Ritz, two fewer than "Rocky") as a buoyantly witty one-level labyrinth on the northeast corner of Madison Avenue and 29th Street, in the Martha Washington Hotel, with lounge after bar after dance floor ingeniously done up in High Cross Reference. Among the sights are a stencilled wall that could serve as a backdrop for Ricky Ricardo; a comic frieze that interprets the Kama Sutra (in one couple, engaged in a not-so-missionary position, the male is depicted fantasizing about a dog, while the female is thinking of television) and encircles a Nick-and-Nora-should-be-here bar; another watering hole that would be the perfect setting for picking up Jane Jetson; and a beguiling NASA-programmed/Russian Constructivist/Italian Brutalist/Nintendoed disco area that belongs in the next book L. Ron Hubbard writes from the grave.

But some people were only interested in a locked black door at the top of a three-step stoop we were resting on. Considering how crazy it drove four men and a busty lady, one would have thought Valhalla was on the other side. "Are you guys the guards here?" they badgered us. "We're friends of John [Argento, Danceteria's owner]. Do you have keys? We think Joanie has keys. Do you know Joanie?" We sat there for an hour. No one ever went in or out of the door behind us. But so intent was this quintet on admittance that they ignored the rest of the festivities, returning more times than early-bird-special addicts to an all-you-can-eat salad bar, desperately seeking Joanie. When we left, they asked if we'd keep an eye out for her, then turned their backs on us as they rushed up the steps to bang on the door. "John, let us in. We know you're having a great time in there. Please." Even if John had been there, he would never have let them in. He's been around, and he knows: a V.I.P. never begs.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Cirque du Soleil—Aerialists, clowns, jugglers, and contortionists *avec une différence.* (Battery Park City. Through June 2. For information about show times and tickets, call 509-5550.)

"Encircling Tides"—An experimental opera-with-dance about Charles Darwin's voyage on the Beagle. (La Mama Annex, 66 E. 4th St. 475-7710. May 16-19 at 7:30.)

Love Ball 2—DIFFA's fund-raising bash. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. May 22 at 8. For information about tickets, call 727-3100.)

Lisa Kron—Presenting her new work, "Facing Life's Problems." (P. S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. May 16-19 at 9:30. Through June 2.)

ART

Maura Sheehan, Kim Jones, and Brett De Palma are not, in common parlance, "uptown artists," which is why it's fun to see their work at the normally proper Herstand gallery (24 West 57th Street; through June 15). Sheehan and Jones are specialists at installation, an ephemeral medium that is both very popular again and somewhat resistant to commerce. De Palma is a maverick not given to "editing" what he paints. In rooms of their own, each of the three has brought vitality and unusual warmth to this capacious, sometimes chilly-seeming space.

Sheehan is known for madcap installations of a tinselly charm, on themes involving geopolitics and the magic of ritual. "Trade Winds," in the gallery's one fenestrated room, is a case of vintage Sheehan. It's an enticingly summery piece that includes jalousies sporting scenic painting, an electric fan decked out in boating flags, piles of white and brown sugar connoting north and south, and a map on which Latin America looms especially large. With its characteristic flair and airy underpinnings, it seems perfectly at ease on this street of dreams in the form of department store windows, even as it asserts its bohemianism.

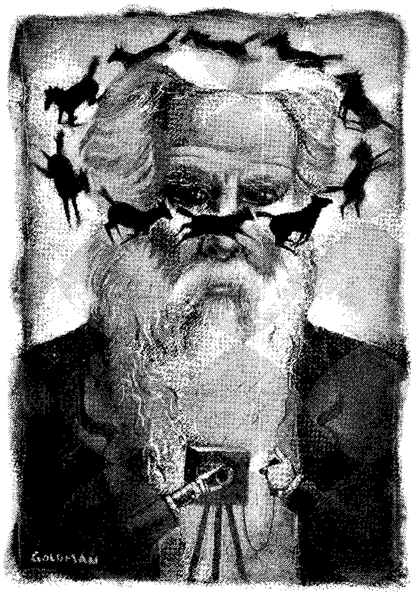
Jones, too, makes new sense on the boulevard. Installations by this Vietnam vet, who is sometimes called Mudman, are recognizable at once by their clusters of sticks suggesting bursts of shrapnel and by their allover device of splattered mud—a bit as if Richard Long had gone to combat instead of on country walks. Here, however, Jones' familiar working style assumes an air of formality that is almost archeologically remote.

De Palma gains most from the trappings of refinement. Not an installation artist at all, De Palma deploys an arsenal of styles—from Cubism to psychedelia—in paintings, found objects, sculptures on pedestals, and works on paper that show rare daring and a fond insubordination to painterly fashion that is healthier than mere disregard. A museum-ready sampler of De Palma's splendid, crazed work has been assembled with impeccable, comic grandeur by Scott Cook, the gallery's urbane director. What's funny is that De Palma's paintings—however polished their frames, and for all their domestication—are really wild at heart, a lot wilder, in fact, than Fauve art.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"The Sculpture of Indonesia" includes more than a hundred and thirty-five bronzes, life-size stone sculptures, and ceremonial objects dating from the eighth century to the fifteenth. . . . ¶ A large exhibition of paintings, drawings, and etchings by Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863). Also on view is a previously unpublished sketchbook from Delacroix's 1828 trip to Touraine. Through June 16. . . . ¶ "The Fauve Landscape" brings together nearly a hundred and twenty-five paintings made between 1904 and 1908 by Derain, Matisse, Braque, and their circle of friends. Through May 19. . . . ¶ A show of illuminated pages and decorative designs from Islamic books produced in Iran, Turkey, and India from the fourteenth century through the nineteenth. Starts May 17. . . . **note:** The museum's roof garden, planted with nine sculptures by Rodin, is open when the weather permits. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—An installation of a huge blanket of stainless-steel hair, with one end suspended from the ceiling, by Kyoko Kumai, a Japanese fibre artist. Although the work is sophisticated in its use of materials, it remains sculpturally uninteresting. Through June 18. . . . ¶ Fifty-five prints from the eighties by Johns, Hockney, Rauschenberg, Lichtenstein, Dine, Rosenquist, and Stella. Starts May 16. . . . ¶ "Mean Streets" is a show of street photographs from the forties through the eighties by such artists as Lisette Model, Garry Winogrand, and Todd Webb. Through July 16. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)



Photographer Eadweard Muybridge

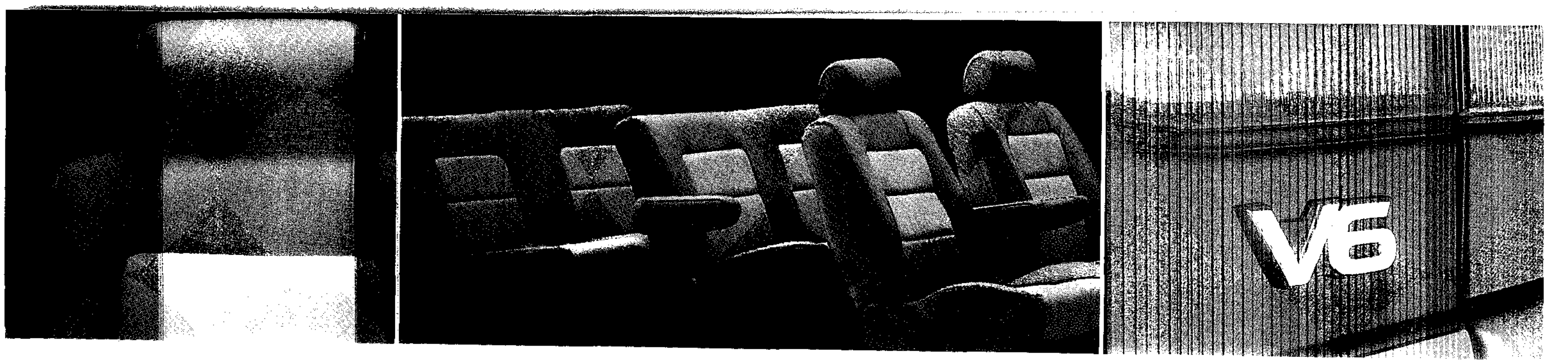
Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until autumn.

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—The Biennial: work by artists whose stars began to rise in the fifties and sixties is on the second floor; work by artists who emerged in the seventies and eighties is on the third floor; and work by late-eighties and nineties artists is on the fourth floor. The "AIDS Timeline," by Group Material, is in the lobby. Through June 16. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—Leon Golub's first three-dimensional installation, titled "WorldWide," employs photographic details from his wall-size canvases, reproduced onto transparent sheets of plastic. Through June 16. . . . ¶ A display of Impressionist paintings and works on paper, titled "Monet and His Contemporaries." Included are five works by Monet, and others by Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, van Gogh, and Picasso. Through June 2. . . . ¶ Forty works of art from Oceania (mostly from the Sepik and Ramu river basins in New Guinea), including three-inch-long fishhooks, three monumental carved-wood "guardians," and a skull rack made of palm, raffia, and bamboo. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—An exhibition that examines the ecosystems of tropical rain forests around the world, such as those in the Congo basin, the Amazon basin, Madagascar, and Borneo. (Open Mondays through Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8:45.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—A show that focusses on one painting: an early Choson-dynasty (1392-1910) Korean Buddhist triad depicting Sakyamuni with two attending bodhisattvas. Also on view are sixty related paintings and sculptures. Through



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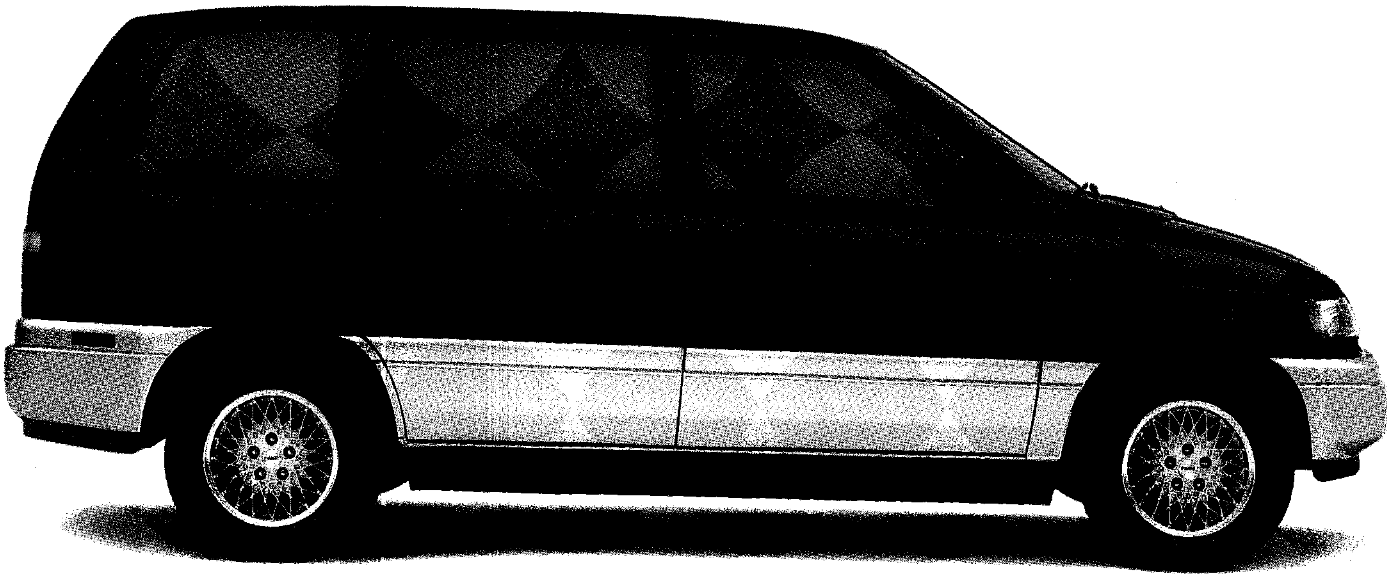

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ART–Cont'd

July 28. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.—Forty-one examples of ancient Chinese bronze vessels, weapons, and personal ornaments ranging from the nineteenth century B.C. (beginning of the Erlitou era) to the third century A.D. (end of the Han dynasty). Through June 15. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—"From Pontormo to Seurat," a show of sixty-one drawings from the Art Institute of Chicago, including works by Gainsborough, Géricault, Redon, Delacroix, and Degas. Through July 7. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Jewish Museum, at the New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"Painting a Place in America" gathers the work of fifty Jewish-American painters and sculptors working in New York between 1900 and 1945. Among the artists represented are Adolph Gottlieb, Louise Nevelson, Chaim Gross, and Max Weber. Starts May 16. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and Sundays, except May 19, 10 to 5; Fridays, 10 to 3.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"Mozart: Prodigy of Nature." A comprehensive exhibition of all things Mozart. There are more than fifty manuscripts, including four pieces composed at age five and a first draft of the Requiem; early letters home from his first trip to Italy (December, 1769), and his last letter to his father (April, 1787); and his "Verzeichnüss aller meiner Werke" ("Catalogue of All My Works"), which he kept for the last seven years of his life. . . . ¶ Eighteenth-century drawings by the Venetian masters Tiepolo, Guardi, and Canaletto. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—In "Illustrating Nature: The Art of Botany," the New York Botanical Garden's collection of art is represented by ninety-five watercolors, pen-and-ink drawings, books, and dried plant specimens. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—"Africa Explores: Twentieth-Century African Art" presents more than a hundred art works in various mediums within five categories: "Traditional," "New Functional," "Urban," "International," and "Extinct." The Center for African Art has organized the exhibition, and it runs simultaneously in their galleries, at 54 E. 68th St. (Open daily except Mondays; opens Sundays at noon.) Starts May 16. . . . ¶ "Embodying Faith," a show of works by five contemporary artists whose subject is the relationship between the physical and the spiritual in Christianity. . . . ¶ "Pintura i Representació," an installation of two visitor-accessible rows of theatre seats in the museum's Broadway windows, by the Catalan artist Perejaume. . . . ¶ "Eclipse of the Earth," an installation by Kazuo Katase. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—A show of fifty paintings, drawings, photographs, and decorative objects that were collected by Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919). . . . ¶ "Justice Rendered" is a show of forty documents and art works related to the three-hundred-year history of the New York Supreme Court. Through July 7. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Kingdoms of Land, Sea, and Sky" includes a hundred and eighty zoological woodcuts, engravings, and watercolors by artists and naturalists such as Albrecht Dürer, John James Audubon, Edward Lear, and Maria Sibylla Merian. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open Mondays through Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.) . . . ¶ Sixty-three prints by Reginald Marsh (1898-1954), depicting New York scenes from the twenties and thirties. Through June 29. (Third Floor Gallery. Open Mondays through Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—A retrospective of works by Romare Bearden (1912-88), which includes a hundred and forty-one oils, collages, and watercolors. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

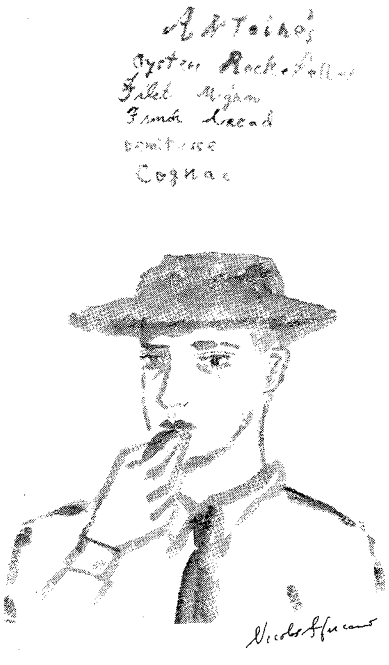
(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

James Lee Byars—A group of sculptures on pedestals, in blue African granite—a sort of lower-grade lapis lazuli that to the 1991 eye is apt to seem quite Trumpish. Their shapes evoke the letters of a cosmic alphabet, without seeming to have a specific meaning or karma. Byars, it would seem, is keyed into post-hippie aristocrats, latter-day northern-European spiritualists, and other New Age garden-club types. Through May 18. (Werner, 21 E. 67th St.)

Short List—**varujan boghosian,** Bernard, 33 E. 74th St. (through May 26); **jean dubuffet,** Elkon, 18 E. 81st St. (through June 8); **brice marden,** Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. (through June 28); **robert motherwell,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (through June 28); **helen sawyer,** Marbella, 28 E. 72nd St. (through May 25); **joe zucker,** Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (open Mondays, through May 28).

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

Nicholas Africano—Although this artist was reared in the Midwest, his sensibility is pure Italian. In these deeply Romantic paintings he depicts subjects with a mythological presence. Several have a Daphne-esque dimension, portraying women partially transformed into trees. These works are nearly monochromatic, and the figures emerge from earthen browns, as if given form in a dust storm. A life-size sculpture of a woman with a marble body, a glass head, and wood arms is breathtaking, with the pathos of opera. Through May 25. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)



Self-portrait by Nicholas Africano

Richard Anuskiewicz—In these revisionist times, one might hope that new work would offer a fresh perspective on this Op painter, whose credibility has been on the wane for about two decades. That hope is not fulfilled. As if to compensate for the inherent blandness of these reliefs, mostly done in wood, the artist has aggressively colored them in hostile, Op-like ways that produce less a war of color than an inevitable audience retreat. Through May 18. (ACA, 41 E. 57th St.)

Charles Burchfield (1893-1967) *and* **John Marin** (1870-1953)—A show that is ostensibly about trees. Both artists had a magical relationship to landscape, but in very different ways. Marin veered toward the abstract—he portrays a nervous and intensely personalized version of Feininger's post-Cubist space—and his work tends to suffer from redundancy. Not so with Burchfield. He is well known for his bleak street scenes of Buffalo and Ohio, a few of which are on display here, but his landscapes are the best works in the show. Some are inhabited by spirits, with trees drooping in a vaguely ghoulish way from the weight of winter snow; others are simply loaded with anxiety. Through May 25. (Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St.)

Short List—**pierre alechinsky,** *Emmerich, 41 E.* 57th St. (through May 31); **enrico baj,** Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St. (through June 15); **norman bluhm,** Washburn, 41 E. 57th St. (through May 31); **george condo,** Pace, 32 E. 57th St. (through May 24); **jeanne duval,** French, 41 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through May 25); **william glackens,** Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through June 8); **gary kuehn,** Drake, 50 W. 57th St. (through June 8); **walt kuhn** and **hugh steers,** Midtown-Payson, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through May 31); **arnaldo roche rabell,** Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St. (through June 4); **holly sears** and **bruce cohen,** Ruth Siegel, 24 W. 57th St. (through June 1); **george segal,** Janis, 110 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through June 8); **antoni tàpies,** Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (through May 25); **michael tetherow,** McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (through June 1).

GALLERIES—SoHo

Kevin Carter—Perhaps everybody has fantasized about attending his or her own funeral. In this installation, Carter stages the funeral of his signature. A coffin holding a cast of the artist is strewn with slides of his past performances; behind it, his crossed-out signatures cover a photomural of the sky. But this is not just a burial of the mark of an artist's genius; a double-exposed photo of Carter and his wife also heralds an end to male supremacy, and addresses the very current theme of androgyny. A videotape of remembrances by Carter's family, including some reflections on the meaning of life, plays continuously. According to a press release, the contents of the exhibition will be buried, at a later date, somewhere in New Jersey. Through May 18. (Baer, 476 Broome St. Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

Christian Eckart—Paintings that consist of four vertical stripes of different colors, surrounded by broad, shiny aluminum frames. The surfaces are luscious, like baked enamel, and the colors are juxtaposed in such a way that each looks great (paint chips should be presented this thoughtfully), but the over-all effect is completely uninteresting. Through May 25. (RubinSpangle, 395 West Broadway.)

Félix González-Torres—One of the strongest artists in the current Whitney Biennial, González-Torres examines issues of loss, mourning, cleansing, and regeneration in a most heartfelt way. This gallery exhibition will change each week during its monthlong run. The first installation was a series of closeup black-and-white photographs of a memorial nature: images of carved walls outside the American Museum of Natural History that list the ostensible attributes of Theodore Roosevelt—patriot, historian, rancher, scientist, etc. The second installation will consist of a go-go stage and several performances. The third will include a series of white paintings entitled "Blood Works," and the fourth a carpet of silver-wrapped candies on the floor and phrases about personal loss on the walls. Through June 1. (Rosen, 130 Prince St.)

Lowell Nesbitt—A not uninteresting show of homoerotic drawings and several paintings spanning three decades in the career of this generally shallow society painter. The best works are those from the early sixties; after that, it's all downhill. Through June 1. (Wessel O'Connor, 580 Broadway.)

Ann Preston—This Biblical-scene installation, titled "Expulsion," recalls an ancient bath or burial chamber. It consists of a series of friezes in shallow relief that seem to offer a female counterpoint to the works of Tom Otterness. Like his friezes, Preston's are full of nimble doughboys and girls whose bodies often look like cartoonish sperm. The piece begins with a tree of breastlike olives and *ends with a conga line* enacting primitivistic rituals of aggression. Through June 1. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

Alan Turner—If anyone can be said to be carrying the late-Guston torch, it is Turner, with his paintings of body fragments combined in surreal ways. (His works also have a certain similarity, if only a formal one, to recent Johnses.) In one work, a segment of skin is pierced by a stylized safety pin with a tiny trumpet mouthpiece at its end. It is unclear what is revealed by the artist's tortured self-examination. Through May 25. (Wingate, 578 Broadway.)

Clemens Weiss—This show includes two major pieces, both of them very effective. One consists of hundreds of flat boxes made of glued broken glass, containing drawings and dis-

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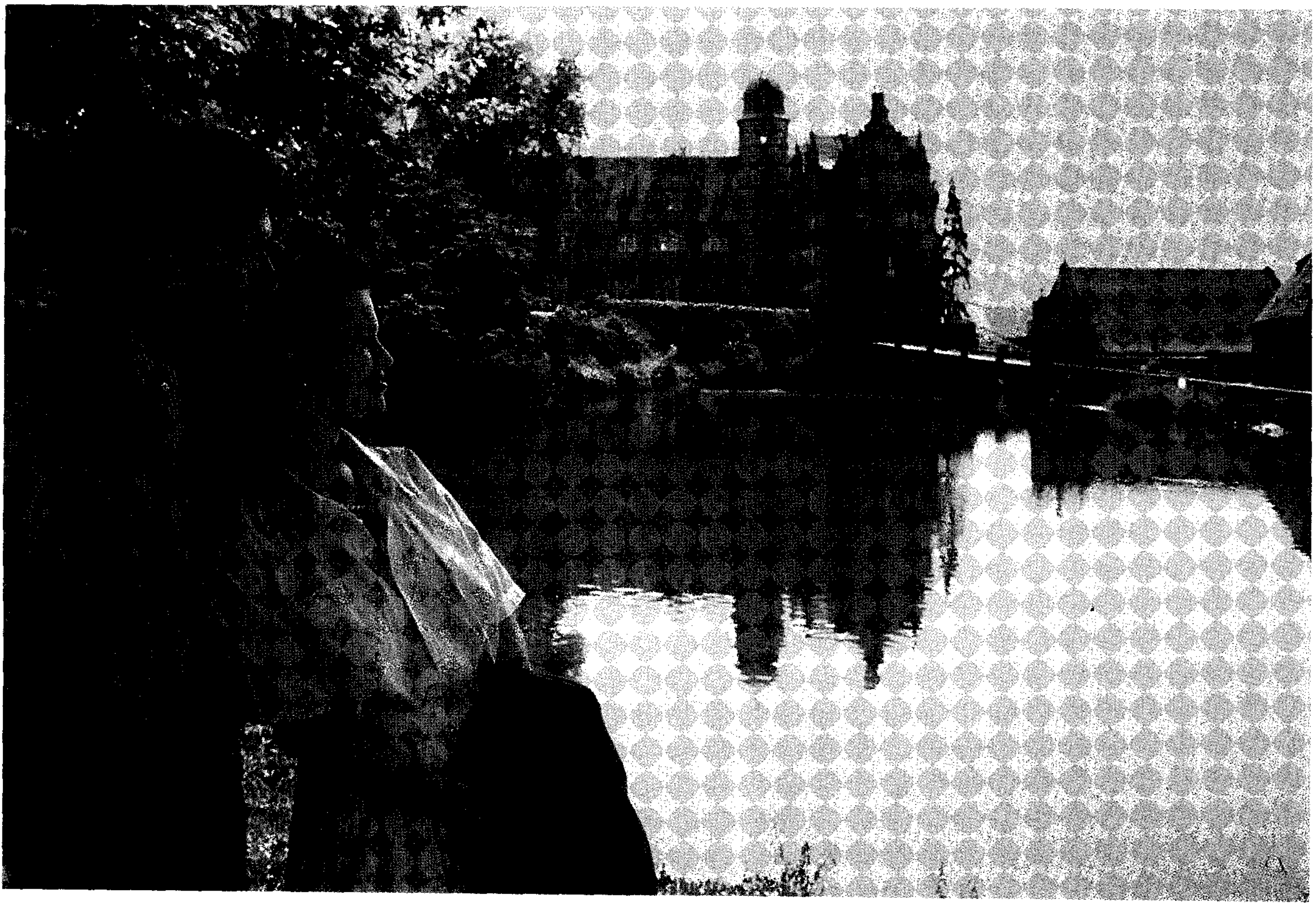

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played on metal shelves (most of the drawings are not visible). The other work consists of a forest of shrines also made of glued broken glass. Through May 25. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

Thomas Woodruff—A show that includes nine oval paintings of a Gilles-like clown, which are executed in an Old Master style but are about as close to Keane's wide-eyed dime-store portraits as enlightened painting gets. Each work shows the clown in a different costume and with different makeup, and each has mournful tears somewhere in it—under the clown's eyes, in the air, pinned to his costume. Through May 25. (P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway.)

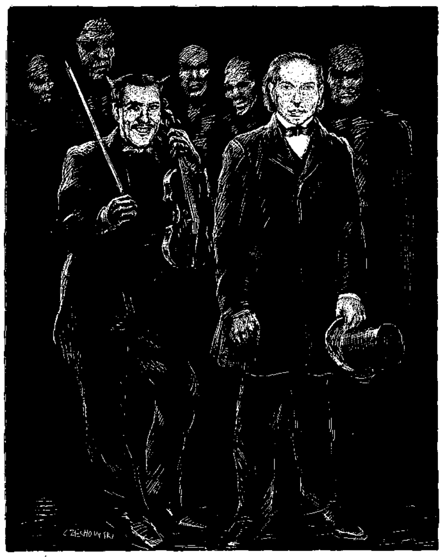
Short List—**ROBERT BEAUCHAMP,** M-13, at 72 Greene St. (through May 18); **BEVERLY BUCHANAN,** Steinbaum, 132 Greene St. (through June 11); **CHRYSSA,** Karg, 100 Greene St. (through May 31); **SAM GILLIAM,** Fendrick, 568 Broadway, entrance on Prince St. (through May 25); **MARY HAMBLETON,** Auchincloss, 558 Broadway (through May 21); **EVA HESSE,** SteinGladstone, 99 Wooster St. (through May 22); ***JAMES HYDE,*** *Good, 532 Broadway* (through June 8); **FRANCES HYNES,** Kelly, 591 Broadway (through June 8); **ALFRED LESLIE,** Flynn, 113 Crosby St. (through June 29); **ROBERT LOBE,** Blum Helman Warehouse, 80 Greene St. (through June 8); **MATT MULLICAN,** Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (through June 1); **DEBORAH OROPALLO,** Germans van Eck, 420 West Broadway (through June 1); **MIMMO PALADINO,** Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. (through June 10); **HENRY PEARSON,** Pearl, 420 West Broadway (through June 1); **RICHARD PETTIBONE,** Marcus, 578 Broadway (through June 1); **ANNE AND PATRICK POIRIER,** Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway (through May 25); **ED RUSCHA,** Castelli, 420 West Broadway (through June 1); **RANDALL SCHMIT,** Donahue, 560 Broadway (through June 8).

PHOTOGRAPHY

ALTHOUGH the exhibition "Mean Streets," at the Museum of Modern Art, borrows its title from Scorsese's film, we can imagine these photographs, all from the museum's collection, being used as inspiration for the movies. The images in this small show, which features American street photography since the nineteen-forties, have a cinematic quality and a gritty dynamic. Susan Kismaric, the curator, has chosen well-known works that exemplify street photography—images by Lisette Model, Robert Frank, Garry Winogrand, Walker Evans—but there are also wonderful shots by lesser-known photographers. Leon Levenstein's 1969 photograph of a man on Fifth Avenue is a powerful, growly portrait, and Todd Webb's long horizontal panel capturing a block on Sixth Avenue in 1948 is a fantastic display of street signs and street action. The fact that many of the pedestrians in Webb's piece have been caught with one foot off the ground gives the scene a lively, on-the-go feel. The most eccentric photograph on view is, not surprisingly, by Diane Arbus. Taken in 1971, it's of a woman accessorized with flair and standing near a curb. The picture is titled "Woman in a Floppy Hat," but the headpiece looks more like a towel wrapped around wet hair after a shower than like a chapeau.

"Photoprojects"—New works in various formats by several young artists, including Richard Rothman, Anne Barnard, Maria Martinez-Cañas, Jean Blackburn, Miriam Fishman, Alice Albert, and Dick Schlefer. Through May 19. (White Columns, 154 Christopher St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Short List—**ALEXANDER ALLAND,** Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St. (open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5; through Oct. 27); **EILEEN COWIN,** Baum, 588 Broadway (through June 1); **ALEXANDRA EDWARDS,** Danziger, 415 West Broadway (through June 8); **RALPH GIBSON,** Castelli Graphics, 578 Broadway (through June 1); **EIKOH HOSOE,** International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8; through May 26); **EL LISSITZKY** and **EDWARD QUIGLEY,** Houk Friedman, 1094 Madison Ave., at 82nd St. (through June 1); **ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through May 18); **EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE** and **DAVID LEVINTHAL,** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (through May 25); **SEBASTIÃO SALGADO,** International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6; through June 11); **CHRIS STEELE-PERKINS,** Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. (through May 25); **THOMAS TULIS,** Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St. (through June 28); **BERNAR VENET,** Sikkema, 155 Spring St. (opens at noon on Saturdays, through May 18); **JOEL-PETER WITKIN,** Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (through June 29).



Patrick Jones and Stephen Len White in the Bronx Opera's "The Devil and Daniel Webster"

MUSIC

T*HE flute has never been quite the same since Edgard Varèse* (with the help of the great French flutist Georges Barrère) made it shriek and rant in "Density 21.5," in 1936. New generations of composers have known it as an instrument capable of expressing the harshness of their century, whether shrilling out at the top of the orchestra or in nervous, explosive solo works. But the flute has not lost its older identity as the instrument of shepherds, of Pan, of seduction; alongside Varèse's work, the other famous twentieth-century composition for unaccompanied flute is Debussy's enigmatic "Syrinx," and both these works have had progeny.

The purity of the flute's basic sound is good raw material for the fragmentation, reassembly, dialogue, and transformation that are the province of computer-aided music processing. With earsplitting volume and in delicate fantasy, "extended flute" works (to call them by a term that is already rather old-fashioned) have for some three decades already carried forward both sides of the instrument's legacy. Patricia Spencer, the flutist of the Da Capo Chamber Players and an artist vigorous both in her playing and in the commissioning and propagation of new works, will give something of a status report on current flute composition with her "Flutelectronics" program, on May 20, at Columbia University's Miller Theatre. Karlheinz Stockhausen is represented with "Kathinka's Chant as Lucifer's Requiem" (a semi-staged excerpt from "Samstag," an installment in his grand operatic cycle on the days of the week). Arthur Kreiger's "Intimate Exchanges" (for flute and tape) and Judith Shatin's "Kairos" will be given their first performances; the remaining works are Libby Larsen's "Aubade" and Salvatore Martirano's "Phleu." And what does "Phleu" mean? In the information sent us, we found the following: "PHLEU was composed with the yahaSALmaMAC *MIDI* orchestra which is a real-time answering service consisting of a Macintosh II computer, a Yamaha *music engine*, 25 synthesizers and a percussion unit, (DX7 E upgrade), TX8-16, REV7, 2 TX8 IZ's, TX5, a Zeta MIDI violin and a program written in Le_Lisp named Sound and Logic (SAL)." The press release goes on like that, but we decided we'd have to hear the concert to find out.

(The box-office number for Avery Fisher Hall is 874-2424; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

OPERA

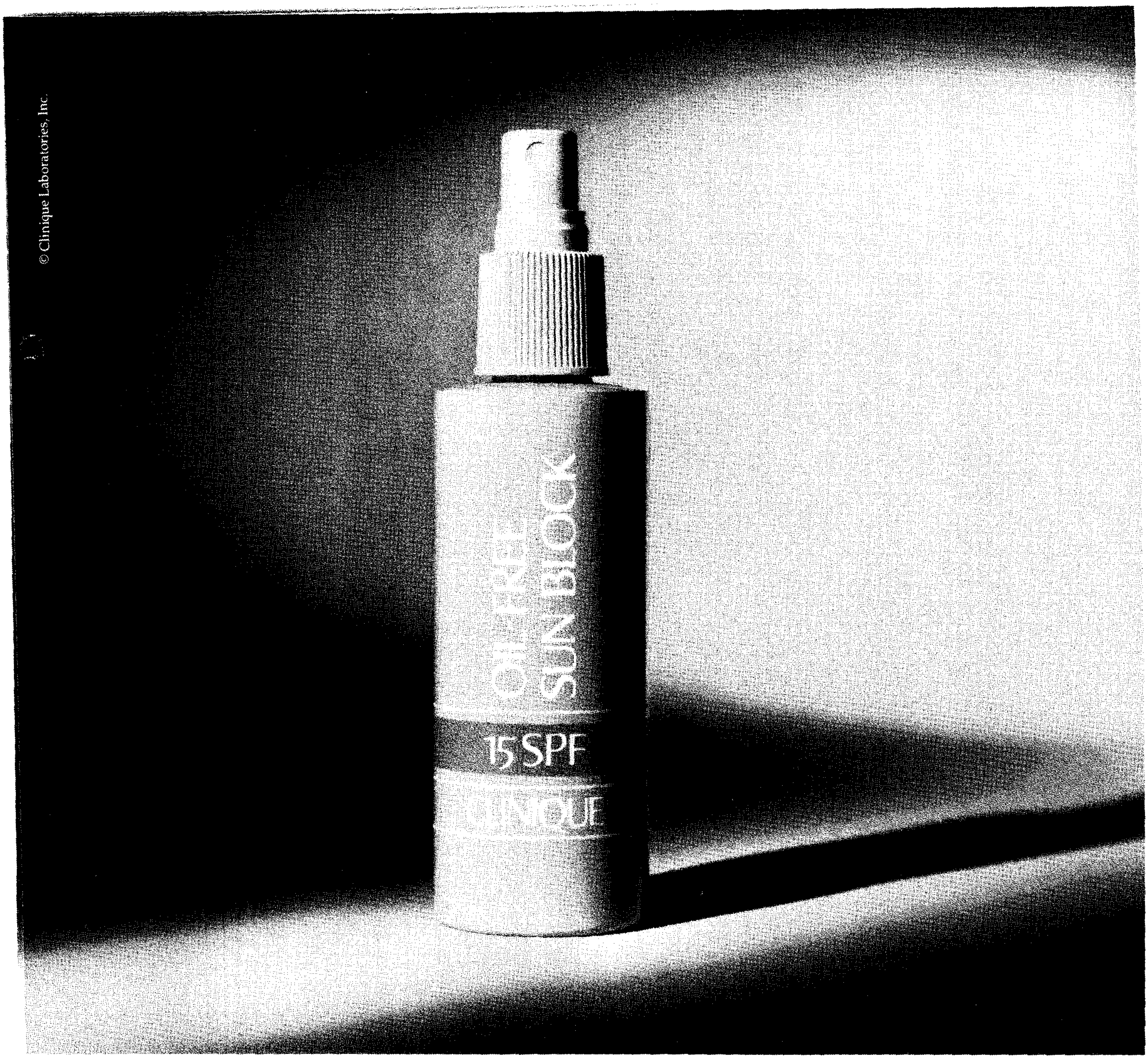
Bronx Opera Company—Presenting a staged double bill of operas involving the legal process: Douglas Moore's folk opera "The Devil and Daniel Webster," based on Stephen Vincent Benét's short story of the same name (a sort of Yankee "Faust"), and Gilbert and Sullivan's "Trial by Jury," in which unutterable confusion is ultimately resolved. Michael Spierman conducts and Cynthia Edwards directs. (John Jay College, Tenth Ave. at 59th St. May 17-18 at 8. For information about tickets, call 787-1356.)

Opera Quotannis—Presenting a staging of Monteverdi's 1624 dramatic cantata, "Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda," conducted by Bart Folse and directed by Brian Morgan. The program also includes a selection of Monteverdi madrigals, performed in concert. (Church of St. Paul the Apostle, Columbus Ave. at 59th St. 265-3209. May 17 and May 19 at 8.)

Mannes Camerata—Paul Echols conducts sixteen singers and a period-instrument orchestra in stagings of two musical-theatre works from the early seventeenth century: Marco da Gagliano's "La Dafne" (1608) and Monteverdi's "Tirsi e Clori" (1615)—the latter to be presented as a choreographed *intermedio* separating the two halves of "La Dafne." (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. 496-8524. May 18 and May 20-21 at 8, and May 19 at 4 and 7.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Zubin Mehta conducts an all-Mozart program that spotlights three of the orchestra's first-desk players: flutist Jeanne Baxtresser and harpist Sarah Bullen in the Flute-and-Harp Concerto, and French hornist Philip Myers in the First Horn Concerto, a fragment of an incomplete Concerto in E Major (K. 494a), and a reconstruction of a Concert Rondo (K. 371). The program is rounded out with the Symphony No. 29 and the "Musical Joke" (K. 522). The latter, completed in 1787, immediately following the deaths of both the composer's father and his beloved pet starling, has been viewed alternatively as a blooper-laden parody of provincial music-making and a liberating release from the stern influence of Mozart



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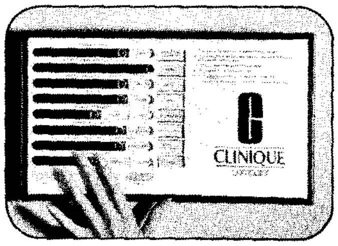

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MUSIC—Cont'd

père. This winter, a psychology professor at Indiana University argued at a scientific symposium that the piece was in fact a tribute to the deceased starling, and that its fragmented tunes mimicked the peculiarities of the unfortunate bird's repertoire. Even without this recent theory, Mozart's pet is assured of a prominent perch in the pantheon of starlingdom, having already achieved well-deserved fame for its ability to chirp a theme from its owner's G-Major Piano Concerto (though, according to Mozart, consistently hitting one note wrong). (Avery Fisher Hall. May 16-18 at 8.)

Philadelphia Orchestra—Riccardo Muti conducts Mozart's Symphony No. 34, Prokofiev's "Classical" Symphony, Hindemith's "Symphonic Metamorphoses on Themes of Carl Maria von Weber," and Mahler's "Rückert Lieder," featuring mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade. (Avery Fisher Hall. May 13 at 8.)

Orchestra of St. Luke's—Olegna Fuschi is featured as soloist in piano concertos by Schumann, Weber, and David Diamond, as well as in Busoni's "Indian Fantasy." José Serebrier conducts. (Carnegie Hall. May 14 at 8.)

Amor Artis Orchestra and Chorus—Johannes Somary conducts a musical tribute to Switzerland, celebrating the seven hundredth anniversary of the Swiss Confederacy. The program includes motets by Ludwig Senfl, the Symphony No. 1 by the eighteenth-century composer Kaspar Fritz, and Frank Martin's "*Ode à la Musique*" (featuring soprano Maryl Cannon and tenor Patrick Romano). Apart from renditions of the Swiss national anthem in the country's four official languages—French, German, Italian, and Romansh—the concert's most unusual byway promises to be Jean Daetwyler's Concerto No. 2 for Alphorn and Orchestra, in which the soloist, Jozsef Molnar, sets aside his accustomed French horn to take up the valveless ten-foot-long shepherd's horn that inevitably evokes high altitudes. (St. Jean Baptiste Church, Lexington Ave. at 76th St. May 14 at 8. For information about tickets, call 874-4513.)

Atlantic Sinfonietta—Andrew Schenck conducts musical-theatre classics of a jazzy bent: the "Little Threepenny Music," from Weill's "Three Penny Opera"; Milhaud's ballet "La Création du Monde"; and the concert suite from Robert Kurka's opera "The Good Soldier Schweik." (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. May 14 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Juilliard Orchestra—Otto-Werner Mueller conducts orchestral works by Strauss and Copland, as well as Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto (with soloist Mitsutaka Shiraisha). (Alice Tully Hall. May 16 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 874-7515.)

New York Pops—Skitch Henderson conducts light concert favorites in a program that includes guest appearances by the Coasters, Rockapella, Jackie Mason, and Walter Cronkite. (Carnegie Hall. May 20 at 7:30.)

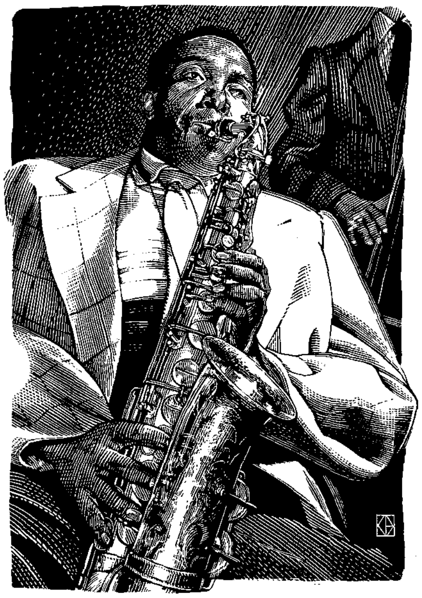
Little Orchestra Society—Dino Anagnost conducts orchestral and sacred works by Vivaldi; with soloists and the Metropolitan Singers/Greek Choral Society. (Alice Tully Hall. May 22 at 8.)

Collegiate Chorale—Robert Bass directs the choir and soloists in Mozart's Requiem. (Winter Garden, World Financial Center, Battery Park City. May 15 at 7:30. No tickets necessary. . . . St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 50th St. May 17 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

St. John's Chorale and Chamber Orchestra—Eric J. Milnes directs Handel's pastorale "Acis and Galatea"; with an early-instrument orchestra and soloists Bente Vist (soprano), Jeffrey Thomas and Michael Hume (tenors), and Nathaniel Watson (bass-baritone). (Merkin Concert Hall. May 15 at 8.)

Greenwich Village Singers—Mark Mangini conducts the choir, soloists, and an orchestra in Handel's oratorio "Solomon." (Church of the Incarnation, 209 Madison Ave., at 35th St. May 17 at 8. For information about tickets, call 679-9146.)

Dessoff Choirs—Amy Kaiser directs sacred works by J. C. Bach and Mozart, as well as the latter's concert aria "Non so d'onde viene," K. 294, written in 1778 for the composer's future sister-in-law and reworked five years later to incorporate elaborate ornamentation. With soprano Erie Mills and the Levin Eighteenth-Century Ensemble. (Alice Tully Hall. May 21 at 8.)



Charlie Parker: a concert tribute

New Amsterdam Singers—Clara Longstreth directs a program that ranges from Tallis's "Lamentations of Jeremiah" and Renaissance motets to Daniel Pinkham's comic cantata "The Saints Preserve Us!" and arrangements by Ward Swingle. (Merkin Concert Hall. May 22 at 8.)

RECITALS

Donald Joyce—The organist performs a concert mainly consisting of works by Max Reger, in observance of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the composer's death. Noted for his dense, chromatic counterpoint, Reger was particularly drawn to the organ. He once said that "every piece of organ music which is not at bottom related to Bach is impossible"; today, he is often acknowledged to be the most imposing German organ composer since that great predecessor. To underscore the connection, Mr. Joyce performs a Bach concerto and several Reger works, including the monumental "Introduction, Variations, and Fugue on an Original Theme in F-Sharp Minor." (Park Avenue Christian Church, Park Ave. at 85th St. May 13 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

New York New Music Ensemble—Presenting Karlheinz Stockhausen's "Inside," one of seventeen "text pieces" from his collection "For Times to Come" (1968-70), in each of which the performers are asked to improvise according to purely verbal instructions. The concert also includes recent electro-acoustic pieces by James Primosch, Judith Shatin, and C. Bryan Rulon. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. May 13 at 8.)

Ory Shihor—The pianist presents works by Mozart, Schubert, Chopin, and Schumann (his "Symphonic Études"). (Merkin Concert Hall. May 14 at 2.)

Kyler Brown—The organist's program includes works by Franck, Widor, and Messiaen. (Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 145 W. 46th St. 921-2939. May 14 at 8.)

New Music Consort—Presenting music by contemporary Japanese composers, including Makoto Shinohara and Toru Takemitsu. (Merkin Concert Hall. May 14 at 8.)

Bargemusic—Presenting solo and chamber music by Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, and Chopin. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. May 16 at 7:30 and May 19 at 4.)

Sylvan Winds—The chamber ensemble presents French works (by Ravel, Milhaud, Gabriel Pierné, and Jean Françaix) and pieces of Gallic inspiration (by Mel Powell and George Tsontakis). (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. May 16 at 8.)

Partita Chamber Ensemble—The group presents a Beethoven duo, Fauré's G-Minor Piano Quartet, a new quintet by Elizabeth Brown, and Hindemith's Octet for winds and strings. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. May 16 at 8.)

José Carlos Cocarelli—The Brazilian pianist, who won the silver medal in the 1989 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, performs Chopin's twenty-four Preludes, Op. 28; Brahms' "Variations on a Theme by Schumann," Op. 9; Berg's Sonata, Op. 1; and Liszt's Concert Paraphrase on the Waltz from Gounod's "Faust." (Carnegie Hall. May 17 at 8.)

Virtuosi Quintet—The ensemble performs arrangements of works by Bach and Schubert, as well as the première of "Three Tableaux for Woodwind Quintet," by Andrew Thomas. (New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St. May 18 at 2. No charge beyond museum admission.)

Ana Maria Trenchi de Bottazzi—Pianist, performing works by Beethoven, Schumann, Granados, Gershwin, and others. (Carnegie Hall. May 19 at 2.)

New Renaissance Chamber Artists—The flute-clarinet-percussion trio performs modern and traditional Japanese works, as well as pieces by Hilary Tann, whose music is strongly influenced by Oriental models. Featuring guest shakuhachi player Jeffrey Lependorf. (Pleiades gallery, 164 Mercer St. May 19 at 7. Tickets at the door on the evening of the concert.)

Patricia Spencer—The flutist samples recent unaccompanied repertoire composed for her instrument, much of it expanded through electronics. The program includes works by Libby Larsen, Salvatore Martirano, and Karlheinz Stockhausen. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. May 20 at 8.)

Bob Telson—A showcase of works by the composer of dance, theatre, and film scores. (Alice Tully Hall. May 20 at 8.)

Ecco Trio—The violin-cello-piano trio performs Tchaikovsky's A-Minor Trio; a new work by the Taiwanese composer Ying Kwang-I; and the Larghetto and Scherzo, Op. 32, written in the mid-eighteen-seventies by John Knowles Paine. (Merkin Concert Hall. May 21 at 8.)

JAZZ / POP / ROCK

PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Deee-Lite—The deee-lightful, deee-licious, deee-lovely Lady Miss Kier Kirby and her two holographic techno-soul partners, sampler Jungle D.J. Towa Towa and mixer D.J. Dmitry, have assembled more than bits and pieces of other funksters' works into a cohesive whole. They have created a global village of sound, incorporating black and white, straight and gay, Age of Aquarius politics with a "free your ass and your mind will follow" desire to dance you into a world of peace, love, and understanding. Surprisingly enough, it works. Their fabulous début album, "World Clique," may not beat De La Soul at their daisy-chain best, but it lets the sunshine in just the same. In concert, they play with a large, flashy, Day-Glo band that promises, on this date, to turn Roseland into Grooveland. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. May 16 at 8:30.)

Chris Isaak—Let us count the ways: Chris Isaak has the pompadour, blue eyes, and beautiful body of a young Chet Baker; the most heartbreakingly gorgeous voice since Roy Orbison; the best band since Springsteen's E Street; and the wryest between-song chatter this side of Lyle Lovett. What else can you ask for from a rock-and-roll hero? He has been around for years, has made three albums (his eponymous second album is one of the great records of the eighties), and recently hit the big time with the better-late-than-never surge of his already classic single "Wicked Game." Isaak and his band, Silvertone (Kenney Johnson on drums, Rowland Salley on bass, and the transcendent Jimmy Wilsey on guitar), come dressed to kill. They set a mood—a haunted, sinister undertow on ballads, a sexy, devil-may-care feel on rockers—and their songs are breathtaking models of economy. (Nothing is overdone and every lyric makes its point.) With Springsteen in hiding, Isaak is probably the best American rocker out there—wild at heart and wonderful of soul. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. May 16-17 at 8.)

Pat Benatar—Beacon Theatre. May 14 at 8.

The Feelies—With Chickasaw Mudd Puppies. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. May 15 at 8.)

Billy Taylor Trio—Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. May 16 at 8.

Dinosaur Jr.—Academy Theatre, 234 W. 43rd St. 947-5850. May 17 at 9.

Cris Williamson—Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. May 18 at 8.

"The Charlie Parker Legacy"—A concert tribute to Bird, with Reggie Workman, Walter Bishop, Jr., Ray Brown, Lou Donaldson, Jimmy Heath, Charles McPherson, Red Rodney, and Art Taylor. (Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 1-718 636-4100. May 18 at 8.)

Bill Cosby—In benefit performances for Harlem Hospital. (Apollo Theatre, 253 W. 125th St. 749-5838. May 20-22 at 7:30 and 10.)

Marlboro Music Festival Concerts—May 15 at 8: Vince Gill, Alan Jackson, and Pam Tillis. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070.) . . . ¶ May 17 at 7:30 and 10: Guy Clark, Joe Ely, Lyle Lovett, and John Hiatt. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.). . . ¶ May 18 at 8: Mark O'Connor, Jerry Douglas, Alison Krauss, and others. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824.)

Bang on a Can Festival—Presenting a staged production of "The Wayward," a musical-theatre work by Harry Partch. Newband performs on instruments that the late Mr. Partch created. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. May 17-19 and May 22 at 8:30. Through May 26.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Yankees—Vs. the Oakland A's, May 13 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the California Angels, May 14-16 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Seattle Mariners, May 17 at 7:30 and May 18-19 at 1:30.

Mets—Vs. the Chicago Cubs, May 21-23 at 7:40.

(The Yankees play at Yankee Stadium, 293-6000, and the Mets play at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499.)

RACING

Horses—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. . . . **Trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8, and Tuesdays at 1. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30. . . . At Saratoga Raceway, Saratoga Springs: Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:45.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Furniture Show—Among the many objects on display at the 1991 International Contemporary Furniture Fair are a hundred selected entries in a competition sponsored by *Metropolis* magazine and the Parsons School of Design. The competition called for furniture designs that were "economically efficient, ecologically sensitive, and aesthetically up to date." (Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, Eleventh Ave. between 34th and 39th Sts. May 22, from 9:30 to 5.)

Audre Lorde Tribute—An afternoon of readings, dancing (by the Urban Bush Women), and music (by Geri Allen) in honor of this poet-professor. Part of a series that focusses on the contribution of Brooklyn artists to the American cultural scene. (Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 1-718 636-4100. May 19 at 3.)

Talks—May 15 at 7: Charlie Chin, a historian, talks about ethnicity in TV cop shows. Segments from "Car 54, Where Are You?," "Hill Street Blues," and "21 Jump Street" will be shown. (Jewish Museum, at the New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ May 17 at 7: David Dubal and Ellen Taaffe Zwilich talk about composing music. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. 570-3949.) . . . ¶ May 21 at 7: Orhan Pamuk, a Turkish novelist, and Paul Berman talk about new fiction in Turkey. (Poets House, 72 Spring St. No tickets necessary.)

Readings—May 16 at 6: James Carroll reads from his new novel, "Memorial Bridge." (Donnell Library Auditorium, 20 W. 53rd St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ May 17 at 7: Alice Walker reads from her new poetry collection. (Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., State Office Building, 163 W. 125th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ May 21 at 8: E. L. Doctorow reads from his own prose. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440.) . . . ¶ May 22 at 6:30: Jonathan Hadary, Peter Riegert, Mary Alice, and Linda Lavin read stories by Clark Blaise, Richard Brautigan, Alice Walker, and Grace Paley. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.)

Memorandum—The Ninth Avenue Food Festival, featuring sausages, ravioli, funnel cakes, and other treats, takes place May 18-19.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Poison" (directed by Todd Haynes).
Theatre 2: "The Comfort of Strangers" (†).
Theatre 3: "La Femme Nikita" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Ballad of the Sad Café" (†).
Theatre 5: "Drowning by Numbers" (Peter Greenaway).
Theatre 6: Through May 16: The Human Rights Watch Film Festival, a seven-day event, with thirty-six films and several discussions. Call 518-3000 for ticket and schedule information. From May 17: "Tatie Danielle" (Etienne Chatiliez, in French), with Tsilla Chelton.

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
May 13: Theatre closed.
May 14-16: Films by Yoko Ono.
From May 17: "Gun Crazy" (1949, Joseph H. Lewis), with Peggy Cummins and John Dall; and "Terror in a Texas Town" (1958, Lewis), with Sterling Hayden and Sebastian Cabot.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Toy Soldiers" (Daniel Petrie, Jr.), with Sean Astin and Wil Wheaton.
Theatre 2: Through May 16: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn), with Steven Seagal. From May 17: "Mannequin Two: On the Move" (Stewart Raffill).
Theatre 3: "FX2—The Deadly Art of Illusion" (Richard Franklin), with Bryan Brown and Brian Dennehy.

Cinema Village 12th Street, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
"Eating" (†).

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "Defending Your Life" (†).
Theatre 2: "Chameleon Street" (1989, Wendell B. Harris, Jr.), with Harris
Theatre 3: "The Object of Beauty" (†).
Theatre 4: "Switch" (Blake Edwards), with Ellen Barkin and Jimmy Smits.
Theatre 5: Through May 16: "One Good Cop" (Heywood Gould), with Michael Keaton. From May 17: "What About Bob?" (Frank Oz), with Bill Murray and Richard Dreyfuss.
Theatre 6: "Forever Mary" (Marco Risi, in Italian).
Theatre 7: "The British Animation Invasion," twenty-five short films.

Loews 19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).
Theatre 2: "Toy Soldiers" (Daniel Petrie, Jr.), with Sean Astin and Wil Wheaton.
Theatre 3: "FX2—The Deadly Art of Illusion" (Richard Franklin), with Bryan Brown and Brian Dennehy.
Theatre 4: "Citizen Kane" (†).
Theatre 5: "A Rage in Harlem" (Bill Dyke), with Forest Whitaker.
Theatre 6: "Alice" (†).

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Oscar" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through May 16: "Dances with Wolves" (†).
From May 17: "Mannequin Two: On the Move" (Stewart Raffill).

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: Through May 16: "One Good Cop" (Heywood Gould), with Michael Keaton. From May 17: "What About Bob?" (Frank Oz), with Bill Murray and Richard Dreyfuss.
Theatre 2: "Defending Your Life" (†).
Theatre 3: "Switch" (Blake Edwards), with Ellen Barkin and Jimmy Smits.
Theatre 4: "The Object of Beauty" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "A Rage in Harlem" (Bill Duke), with Forest Whitaker.
Theatre 2: "FX2—The Deadly Art of Illusion" (Richard Franklin), with Bryan Brown and Brian Dennehy.
Theatre 3: Through May 16: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly. From May 17: "Stone Cold" (Craig R. Baxley).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"A Kiss Before Dying" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Dances with Wolves" (†).

THE MOVIE HOUSES

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 23.

Sutton I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "One Good Cop" (Heywood Gould), with Michael Keaton.
Theatre 2: "Switch" (Blake Edwards), with Ellen Barkin and Jimmy Smits.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
Through May 16: "Sleeping with the Enemy" (Joseph Ruben), with Julia Roberts and Patrick Bergin.
From May 17: "Mannequin Two: On the Move" (Stewart Raffill).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Truly, Madly, Deeply" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through May 16: "The Object of Beauty" (†). From May 17: "Stone Cold" (Craig R. Baxley), with Brian Bosworth.
Theatre 2: "FX2—The Deadly Art of Illusion" (Richard Franklin), with Bryan Brown and Brian Dennehy.

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"A Rage in Harlem" (Bill Duke), with Forest Whitaker.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph).
Theatre 2: "A Kiss Before Dying" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: Through May 16: "Defending Your Life" (†). From May 17: "Opening Night" (1977, John Cassavetes), with Gena Rowlands, Ben Gazzara, Joan Blondell, and Cassavetes.
Theatre 2: "Oscar" (†).
Theatre 3: Through May 16: "Shadows" (1961, John Cassavetes). From May 17: "What About Bob?" (Frank Oz), with Bill Murray and Richard Dreyfuss.

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Toy Soldiers" (Daniel Petrie, Jr.), with Sean Astin and Wil Wheaton.
Theatre 2: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Impromptu" (†).

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sweet Talker" (Michael Jenkins), with Bryan Brown and Karen Allen.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Strangers in Good Company" (Cynthia Scott).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Truth or Dare" (Alek Keshishian).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Toy Soldiers" (Daniel Petrie, Jr.).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: Through May 16: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly. From May 17: "Stone Cold" (Craig R. Baxley), with Brian Bosworth.
Theatre 2: "A Kiss Before Dying" (†).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Switch" (Blake Edwards), with Ellen Barkin and Jimmy Smits.
Theatre 2: Through May 16: "Oscar" (†). From May 17: "What About Bob?" (Frank Oz), with Bill Murray and Richard Dreyfuss.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through May 21: "Herdsmen of the Sun" (1988, directed by Werner Herzog) and "Black Water" (Allen Moore). From May 22: "The Wonderful World of Dogs" (Mark Lewis) and "A Little Vicious" (Immy Humes).
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "Paris Is Burning" (†).

Bleecker Movie House, 144 Bleecker St. (807-9205)
Through May 16: "The Vanishing" (†).
From May 17: To be announced.

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).
Theatre 2: "A Kiss Before Dying" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"A Rage in Harlem" (Bill Duke), with Forest Whitaker.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Impromptu" (†).
Theatre 2: Through May 16: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly. From May 17: "Stone Cold" (Craig R. Baxley).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Oscar" (†).
Theatre 2: "Mr. & Mrs. Bridge" (†).
Theatre 3: "Cross My Heart" (Jacques Fansten, in French).
Theatre 4: "Reversal of Fortune" (†).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Defending Your Life" (†).
Theatre 2: "Truth or Dare" (Alek Keshishian), with Madonna.
Theatre 3: "Switch" (Blake Edwards).
Theatre 4: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph).
Theatre 5: Through May 16: "China Cry" (James F. Collier). From May 17: "Mannequin Two: On the Move" (Stewart Raffill).
Theatre 6: "A Kiss Before Dying" (†).
Theatre 7: "Impromptu" (†).
Theatre 8: Through May 16: "Truth or Dare." From May 17: "Stone Cold" (Craig R. Baxley), with Brian Bosworth.
Theatre 9: "The Object of Beauty" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).
Theatre 2: "New Jack City" (†).
Theatre 3: Through May 16: "One Good Cop" (Heywood Gould), with Michael Keaton. From May 17: "What About Bob?" (Frank Oz).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Oscar" (†).

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Mister Johnson" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Object of Beauty" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Doors" (†).
Theatre 4: "Drowning by Numbers" (Peter Greenaway).
Theatre 5: (Separate admissions) "Class Action" (†); and "Home Alone" (Chris Columbus), *with Macaulay Culkin.*
Theatre 6: "Impromptu" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Spartacus" (†).

Loews Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Citizen Kane" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Journey of Hope" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "La Femme Nikita" (†).
Theatre 2: Through May 16: "Alice" (†). From May 17: "Tatie Danielle" (Etienne Chatiliez, in French), with Tsilla Chelton.

Loews Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
Through May 18: "Daddy Nostalgia" (Bertrand Tavernier, in English and French).
From May 19: "An Angel at My Table" (Jane Campion), with Kerry Fox.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Dances with Wolves" (†).

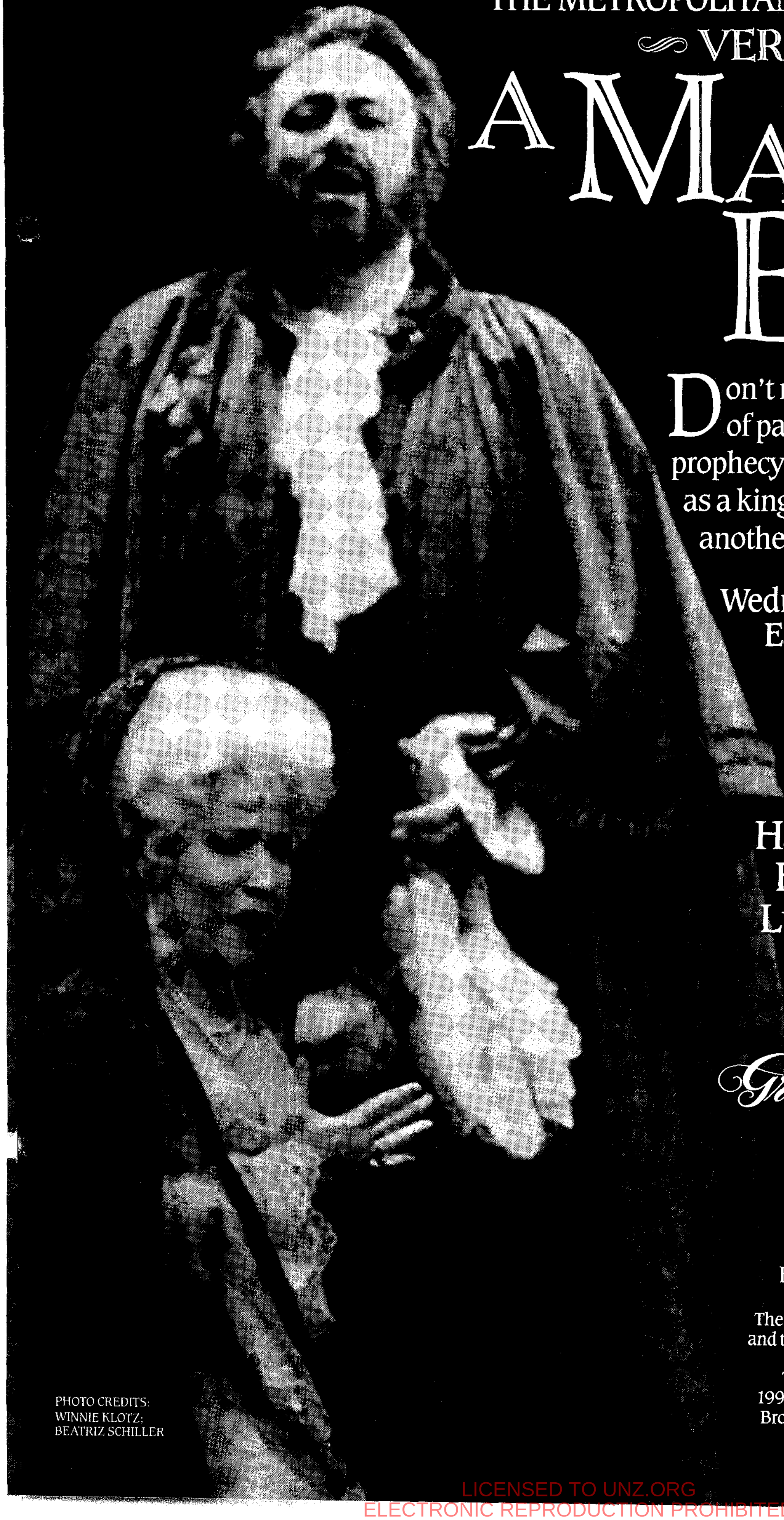
Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Defending Your Life" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"A Kiss Before Dying" (†).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "The Nasty Girl" (Michael Verhoeven, in German), with Lena Stolze.
Theatre 2: "Cyrano de Bergerac" (Jean-Paul Rappeneau, in French).
Theatre 3: "Ju Dou" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"The Object of Beauty" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Truth or Dare" (Alek Keshishian), with Madonna.
Theatre 2: "Toy Soldiers" (Daniel Petrie, Jr.).



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MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

Theatre 3: "Switch" (Blake Edwards), with Ellen Barkin and Jimmy Smits.
Theatre 4: Through May 16: "One Good Cop" (Heywood Gould), with Michael Keaton. From May 17: "What About Bob?" (Frank Oz), with Bill Murray and Richard Dreyfuss.
Theatre 5: "Oscar" (†).
Theatre 6: "FX2—The Deadly Art of Illusion" (Richard Franklin), with Bryan Brown and Brian Dennehy.

METRO CINEMA 1 AND 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: Through May 16: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly. From May 17: "Stone Cold" (Craig R. Baxley).
Theatre 2: "Impromptu" (†).

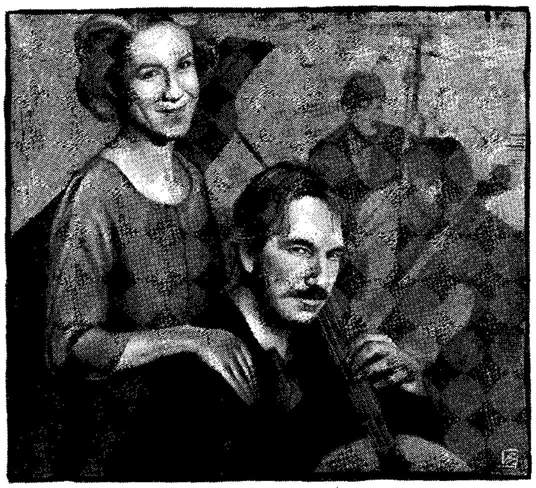
OLYMPIA I AND II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "A Rage in Harlem" (Bill Duke), with Forest Whitaker.
Theatre 2: "A Rage in Harlem."

TIMES SQUARE AREA

CRITERION CENTER, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Toy Soldiers" (directed by Daniel Petrie, Jr.).
Theatre 2: "Out for Justice" (John Flynn).
Theatre 3: Through May 16: "Warlock" (Steve Miner), with Julian Sands. From May 17: "Mannequin Two: On the Move" *(Stewart Raffill)*.
Theatre 4: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).
Theatre 5: Through May 16: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze" (Michael Pressman). From May 17: "Dice Rules" (Jay Dubin), Andrew Dice Clay in concert.
Theatre 6: "Sleeping with the Enemy" (Joseph Ruben), with Julia Roberts and Patrick Bergin.

EMBASSY I, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
Through May 16: "One Good Cop" (Heywood *Gould), with Michael Keaton.*
From May 17: "What About Bob?" (Frank Oz), with Bill Murray and Richard Dreyfuss.

EMBASSY 2, 3, AND 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: "FX2—The Deadly Art of Illusion" (Richard Franklin).



At the Plaza, Juliet Stevenson and Alan Rickman in "Truly, Madly, Deeply"

Theatre 2: Through May 16: "Dances with Wolves" (†). From May 17: "One Good Cop" (Heywood Gould).
Theatre 3: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).

LOEWS ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"A Rage in Harlem" (Bill Duke), with Forest Whitaker.

NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: Through May 16: "Mortal Thoughts" (Alan Rudolph), with Demi Moore and Glenne Headly. From May 17: "Stone Cold" (Craig R. Baxley), with Brian Bosworth.
Theatre 2: "A Kiss Before Dying" (†).

WEST SIDE CINEMA 1 AND 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "New Jack City" (†).
Theatre 2: "Switch" (Blake Edwards).

REVIVAL HOUSES

BIOGRAPH CINEMA, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
May 13: "The Magnificent Ambersons" (1942, directed by Orson Welles), with Dolores Costello, Joseph Cotten, Tim Holt, and Agnes Moorehead; and "Jane Eyre" (1944, Robert Stevenson), with Joan Fontaine and Welles.
May 14-15: "Portrait of Jennie" (1949, William Dieterle), with Jennifer Jones, Joseph Cotten, Ethel Barrymore, Lillian Gish, and David Wayne; and "The Enchanted Cottage" (1945, John Cromwell), with Robert Young, Dorothy McGuire, and Herbert Marshall.
May 16-18: "Dark Passage" (1947, Delmer Daves), with Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, and Agnes Moorehead; and "The Lady from Shanghai" (1948, Orson Welles), with Rita Hayworth, Everett Sloane, and Welles.
May 19-20: "The Third Man" (1950, Carol Reed), with Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, Alida Valli, and Trevor Howard; and "Journey Into Fear" (†).
May 21-22: "The Window" (1949, Ted Tetzlaff), with Bobby Driscoll, Arthur Kennedy, and Barbara Hale; and "The Set-Up" (†).

CINEMA VILLAGE 3RD AVENUE, between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)
Through May 14: "Death in Venice" (1971, Luchino Visconti), with Dirk Bogarde and Bjorn Andresen; and "The Belly of an Architect" (1987, Peter Greenaway).
May 15-18: "Life and Nothing But" (1990, Bertrand Tavernier; in French); and "The Sacrifice" (1986, Andrei Tarkovsky; in Swedish), with Erland Josephson.
From May 19: "A Room with a View" (†); and "Maurice" (1987, James Ivory), with James Wilby, Hugh Grant, and Rupert Graves.

FILM FORUM 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
May 13: "Sunset Boulevard" (1950, Billy Wilder), with Gloria Swanson, William Holden, and Erich von Stroheim; and "Ace *in the Hole" ("The Big Carnival"; 1951,* Wilder), with Kirk Douglas and Jan Sterling.
May 14-15: "The Major and the Minor" (1942, Billy Wilder), with Ginger Rogers, Ray Milland, and Rita Johnson; and "Five Graves to Cairo" (1943, Wilder), with Franchot Tone, Akim Tamiroff, Anne Baxter, Erich von Stroheim, and Peter Van Eyck.
May 16: "Mauvaise Graine" (1933, Billy Wilder and Alexander Esawy); *and "People on Sunday"* (1929, Robert Siodmak).
May 17-18: "Double Indemnity" (1944, Billy Wilder), with Barbara Stanwyck, Fred MacMurray, and Edward G. Robinson; and "The Lost Weekend" (†).
May 19-20: "Ninotchka" (1939, Ernst Lubitsch), with Greta Garbo, Melvyn Douglas, and Sig Rumann; and "Ball of Fire" (†).
May 21-22: "A Foreign Affair" (1948, Billy Wilder), with Jean Arthur, Marlene Dietrich, and John Lund; and "The Emperor Waltz" (1948, Wilder), with Bing Crosby and Joan Fontaine.

THEATRE 80 ST. MARKS, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
May 13: "The Threepenny Opera" (1931, G. W. Pabst; in German), with Lotte Lenya; and "The Blue Angel" (1929, Josef von Sternberg; in German), with Marlene Dietrich, Emil Jannings, and Hans Albers.
May 14: "Written on the Wind" (1957, Douglas Sirk), with Rock Hudson, Lauren Bacall, Robert Stack, and Dorothy Malone; and "The Tarnished Angels" (1958, Sirk), with Hudson, Stack, and Malone.
May 15: "It Happened One Night" (1934, Frank Capra), with Claudette Colbert, Clark Gable, Walter Connolly, Roscoe Karns, and Alan Hale; and "Twentieth Century" (1934, Howard Hawks), with John Barrymore, Carole Lombard, and Ralph Forbes.
May 16: "Alphaville" (1965, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Eddie Constantine, Anna Karina, and Akim Tamiroff; and "Le Gai Savoir" (1968, Godard; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud.
May 17-18: "Annie Hall" (1977, Woody Allen), with Allen and Diane Keaton; and "Manhattan" (1979, Allen), with Allen, Keaton, Michael Murphy, and Meryl Streep.
May 19: "The Bicycle Thief" (†); and "Miracle in Milan" (1951, Vittorio De Sica; in *Italian*), with Francesco Golissano, Brunella Bovo, Paolo Stoppa, and Emma Gramatica.
May 20: "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" (1919, Robert Wiene; a German silent film), with Werner Krauss, Conrad Veidt, Lil Dagover, and Friedrich Feher; and "M" (1932, Fritz Lang; in German), with Peter Lorre.
May 21: "Whirlpool" (1950, Otto Preminger), with Gene Tierney, José Ferrer, and Richard Conte; and "Where the Sidewalk Ends" (1950, Preminger), with Tierney, Dana Andrews, and Gary Merrill.
May 22: "Pretty Poison" (†); and "Point Blank" (1967, John Boorman), with Lee Marvin, Angie Dickinson, Carroll O'Connor, and Keenan Wynn.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—May 13 at 3: "226-1960" (1984, directed by Richard Rogers), a documentary; and "Correction Please, or How We Got Into Pictures" (1979, Noel Burch), a documentary. . . . ¶ May 13 at 6: "The Lighted Field" (1987, Andrew Noren). . . . ¶ May 14 at 3: "Mario Botta" (1988, Andreas Pfaffli) and "Louis Kahn" (1974, Paul Falkenberg and Hans Namuth). . . . ¶ May 14 at 6: "Siren of the Tropics" (1927, Henri Etievant and Mario Nalpas; in French, with no English subtitles), with Josephine Baker; and "The Master of the House" (1925, Carl Dreyer; in Danish). . . . ¶ May 16 at 3 and 6: "Rajmohan Gandhi: Encounters with the Truth" (1990, Clare Gartell Davis), a documentary; and "The Saint from North Battleford" (1989, Selwyn Jacobs). . . . ¶ May 17 at 3 and 6: Five short films by Arthur Peleshian. . . . ¶ May 18 at 2:30: A program of short animated films by *Jane Aaron*. . . . ¶ May 18 at 5: "Contacts" (1990). . . . ¶ May 19 at 2:30: "Images of the Depression, 1930-40" (1990, Robert W. Wagner and George C. Stoney). . . . ¶ May 19 at 5: An excerpt from "Empire" (1963, Andy Warhol); and "Kiss" (1964, Warhol), with Naomi Levine, Gerard Malanga, and Baby Jane Holzer. . . . ¶ May 20 at 3: "Alias Will James" (1989, Jacques Godbout). . . . ¶ May 20 at 6:30: "Broken Meat" (1990) and other works by Pola Rappaport, who will be present. . . . ¶ May 21 at 3: Three films by Max Linder; and "Le Cinéma de Peche" (1989, Gabriel Gonnet; in French).

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—"The Art of Reality: Innovators of the Documentary." May 18 at 2: "Ethnic Notions" (1987) and "Tongues Untied" (1989), both by Marlon Riggs. . . . ¶ May 18 at 4:30: "When the Mountains Tremble" (1983, Pamela Yates and Tom Sigel). . . . ¶ May 19 at 2: "Third Avenue: Only the Strong Survive" (1980). . . . ¶ May 19 at 3:30: "Hard Metals Disease" (1985-87, Jon Alpert). . . . ¶ May 19 at 5: "Health Care: Your Money or Your Life" (1977).

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES, 32-34 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (477-2714)—May 15 at 6: "Aerogard" (1935, Alexandr Dovzhenko). . . . ¶ May 15-16 at 8, May 17 at 6, May 18 at 4 and 8, May 19 at 6, and May 22 at 8: "Goddess Remembered" (1990) and "The Burning Times" (1990), both by Donna Read. . . . ¶ May 16 at 6, May 17 at 10:30, and May 19 at 8: "Lipstick" (1960, Damiano Damiani; in Italian). . . . ¶ May 16 at 10, *May 17 at 10:30, and May 18 at 10:* "The Deadman" (1989, Peggy Ahwesh and Keith Sanborn), and "Sink or Swim" (1990, Su Friedrich). . . . ¶ May 17 at 8:30; May 18 at 1, 2:55, 5:15, and 7:26; May 19 at 3:15, 5:35, and 8:20; May 20 at 7:58 and 8:17; May 21 at 7 and 8:30; and May *22* at 6 and 6:30: Programs of Latin-American films. . . . ¶ May 17 at 8: Five films by Les Levine.

WHITNEY MUSEUM, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—May 14 at 6:15 and May 15 at 2: "New York Portrait: Part III" (1990, Peter Hutton), "Siskyavi: The Place of Chasms" (1989, Victor Masayesva), and "Fade to Black" (1990, Tony Cokes and Don Trammel). . . . ¶ May 16-17 at 2: "Sur del Sur" (1990, Francesc Torres), "Belladonna" (1989, Ida Applebroog and Beth B), "Memories from the Department of Amnesia" (1989, Janice Tanaka), and "Sink or Swim" (1990, Su Friedrich). . . . ¶ May 18-19 at 2: "Paris Is Burning" (†); "Video Is Television?" (1989, Antonio Muntadas), and "They Are Lost to Vision Altogether" (1989, Tom Kalin). . . . ¶ May 21 at 6:15 and May 22 at 2: "the lost weekend" (1989, Gregg Araki).

Museum of Television and Radio, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"On Stage at Carnegie Hall: A Centennial Celebration." May 14-18: "NBC Symphony Orchestra with Arturo Toscanini" (1952) and "NBC Symphony Orchestra with Arturo Toscanini" (1951). . . . From May 21: "A Pretty Good Night at Carnegie Hall" (1989, Disney), with Garrison Keillor and Chet Atkins. Showings Tuesdays at 2:30 and 5:30 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 2:30. . . . ¶ "A Salute to Monty Python." May 14-18: Episodes 41-45 of "Monty Python's Flying Circus," with Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, and Michael Palin. . . . From May 21: "Do Not Adjust Your Stocking" (1968), a Yuletide episode; and "Ripping Yarns: Roger of the Raj" (1979, BBC). Showings Tuesdays at 12:15, 2:30, and 5:30; Wednesdays through Fridays at 12:15 and 2:30; and Saturdays at 12:15.

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—May 15 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "May Fools" (1990, Louis Malle; in French), with Michel Piccoli, Miou-Miou, Dominique Blanc, and Michel Duchaussoy. . . . ¶ May 22 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Topaze" (1933, Louis Gasnier; in French), with Louis Jouvet, Edwige Feuillère, Simone Héliard, and Marcel Vallée.

Donnell Library Center, 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619)—May 14 at noon: "Broken Noses" (1987, Bruce Weber). . . . ¶ May 14 at 2:30: "Misty" (1961, James B. Clarke), with David Ladd, Pam Smith, and Arthur O'Connell. . . . ¶ May 16 at noon: "Baobab: Portrait of a Tree" (1972, Alan and Joan Root). . . . ¶ May 21 at noon: "Raging Bull" (1980, Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Cathy Moriarty, and Joe Pesci. . . . ¶ May 21 at 2:30: "A Dog of Flanders" (1959, James B. Clark), with David Ladd and Donald Crisp.

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway. (1-718 638-5000)—"William Greaves: Chronicler of the African-American Experience." May 18 at 7:30: "Lost Boundaries" (1949, Alfred L. Werker), with Beatrice Pearson and Mel Ferrer. . . . ¶ May 19 at 2: "Frederick Douglass: An American Life" (1984), "Booker T. Washington: The Life and the Legacy" (1982), and "Ida B. Welles: A Passion for Justice" (1989).

Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., State Office Building, 163 W. 125th St. (873-5040)—May 17 at 2: "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" (1979, Fiedler Cook), with Diahann Carroll, Ruby Dee, and Roger Mosley; and "The Color Purple" (1985, Steven Spielberg), with Whoopi Goldberg, Danny Glover, and Oprah Winfrey. . . . ¶ May 17 at 9: "Blacks in Blue Comedy" (1991), historical film footage of Redd Foxx, Richard Pryor, and others.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

Alice—Woody Allen's latest picture is an awkward blend of whimsy and moralizing. The title character, played by Mia Farrow, is a pampered Upper East Side lady-who-lunches. She lives in a huge apartment with her handsome husband (William Hurt), her adorable children, and a staff, and she looks terrific. But her life, the movie tells us, is totally empty and false. A Chinatown doctor (Keye Luke) gives her a variety of herbal remedies to knock the yuppie malaise out of her system. One of them makes her invisible; one makes her irresistible to men; and so on. As these fantasy episodes mount up, Alice begins to see how artificial her life is, how far she's strayed from the pure ideals of her Catholic girlhood, how much more love she needs than she has been getting, and what a revolting piece of Wasp slime her husband is. In the end, the heroine seems, incredibly, to have redeemed herself through self-absorption; the movie doesn't benefit from any such miracle. Although there are more jokes here than in any of Allen's last few features, the picture isn't really a comedy; it's a sermon with gags. The large cast also includes Joe Mantegna, Alec Baldwin, Blythe Danner, Judy Davis, Bob Balaban, and Bernadette Peters (who does a sensational brief turn as a cynical muse).—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/31/90.) (Loews 19th Street East 6. . . . ¶ Carnegie Hall Cinemas; through May 16.)

The Ballad of the Sad Café—With Vanessa Redgrave, Keith Carradine, Rod Steiger, and Cork Hubbert; directed by Simon Callow. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Angelika Film Center.)

Ball of Fire (1942)—The romantic collision of Sugarpuss O'Shea, a burlesque dancer (Barbara Stanwyck), and Bertram Potts, a fuddy-duddy professor (Gary Cooper), is played as if it were terribly bright, but it's rather shrill and tiresome. Howard Hawks directed, but Brackett and Wilder did the script, and Wilder's influence seems strong. The professor's colleagues have corny cute names and carry on like people left over from a stock-company Viennese operetta. The cast includes Dana Andrews, Dan Duryea, and Allen Jenkins, and, as the professors, Oscar Homolka, Henry Travers, S. Z. Sakall, Tully Marshall, Leonid Kinskey, Richard Haydn, and Aubrey Mather. Gene Krupa and his band are also on the screen. Gregg Toland was the cinematographer for this expensive Samuel Goldwyn production. (Remade in 1948, as "A Song Is Born.")—P.K. (Film Forum 2; May 19-20.)

The Bicycle Thief (1949)—This story of a poor man's search for his stolen bicycle is deceptively simple. At first, there is ironic tenderness: humanity observed with compassion but without illusion. Then the search becomes an odyssey of poverty, encompassing much more than the realistic method leads you to expect. And the richness and the enigmas sneak up on you. What is the meaning of the seeress's words? How is it that the hero who is searching for the bicycle thief becomes the bicycle thief? This neorealist classic, directed by Vittorio De Sica and written by Cesare Zavattini, is on just about everybody's list of the greatest films. It isn't a movie that warms you, though; it doesn't have the flawed poetry that De Sica's "Shoeshine" and "Miracle in Milan" have. It's a more impersonal great film. In Italian.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; May 19.)

Citizen Kane (1941)—The Orson Welles film is generally considered the greatest American film of the sound period, and it may be more fun than any other great movie. Based on the life of William Randolph Hearst, it's an exuberant, muckraking attack on an archetypal economic baron. With Welles, of course, and Joseph Cotten, Dorothy Comingore, Agnes Moorehead, Everett Sloane, George Coulouris, Ruth Warrick, Ray Collins, Erskine Sanford, William Alland, Paul Stewart, Fortunio Bonanova, Gus Schilling, and Philip Van Zandt. Screenplay by Herman J. Mankiewicz and Welles; cinematography by Gregg Toland; editing by Robert Wise and Mark Robson; music by Bernard Herrman; art direction by Van Nest Polglase and Perry Ferguson.—P.K. (Loews 19th Street East 6, and Loews Festival.)

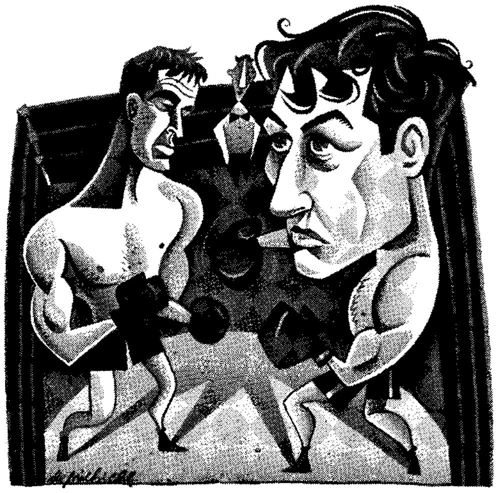
Class Action—In this high-concept legal thriller, directed by Michael Apted, Gene Hackman plays a flamboyant lawyer who specializes in civil-liberties and consumer-advocacy cases, and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio plays his daughter, an ambitious associate in a slick corporate-law firm. The script—by Carolyn Shelby, Christopher Ames, and Samantha Shad—contrives to pit the father and the daughter against each other in a negligence suit against an auto manufacturer. Sparks, both personal and professional, are meant to fly, but the Hollywood engineers who designed this piece of product have cut a few too many corners: the thriller plotting is predictable, the family drama is broad and sentimental, and the connections between them are facile. Yet Hackman and Mastrantonio somehow manage to impart lifelike rhythms to their scenes together: their skill keeps this rickety contraption from stalling completely.—T.R. (Worldwide Cinemas.)

The Comfort of Strangers—Harold Pinter's screenplay, adapted from a novel by Ian McEwan, is a kinky contemporary variation on the sort of plot that made Victorian readers shiver—the story of innocents lured into the clutches of charming villains. The innocents here are an unmarried English couple (Natasha Richardson and Rupert Everett) vacationing in Venice; the evil seducers are a husband and wife (Christopher Walken and Helen Mirren) whose tastes run to voyeurism and sadomasochism; the dread lair in which the monsters toy with their prey is a huge, ornately furnished apartment with a spectacular view of the city. The director, Paul Schrader, dresses his characters in Armani and sets the camera in motion to swirl gracefully around them, picking up miragelike shimmers from the canals and beautiful but ominous architectural details; the languorous camera movements create an authentically gothic sense of catastrophe just around the corner. Walken glides effortlessly through his role as the embodiment of Old World evil. He gives the character a lordly, sinister air, and suggests, as well, that he's wearing something really odd underneath his superbly tailored white suits. And Richardson is characteristically amazing: she brings a touch of humanity to this rather formal party. The movie improves on the novel by jettisoning its dubious psychology and its pretensions to literary significance. Schrader treats the story as an elegant horror-movie game, a trick done with mirrors, and he carries it off. Dante Spinotti's cinematography and Gianni Quaranta's production design contribute to the luxurious, decadent atmosphere. Music by Angelo Badalamenti.—T.R. (4/8/91) (Angelika Film Center.)

Dances with Wolves—Set during the Civil War, this big Indians-versus-Cavalry epic is like a New Age social-studies lesson. Kevin Costner, who directed and is the star, has an untroubled face and laid-back diction. As Lieutenant Dunbar, a Union officer, he sees that the Sioux have a superior culture and he changes sides. This is a nature-boy movie, a kid's daydream of being an Indian. When Dunbar has become a Sioux named Dances with Wolves, he writes in his journal that he knows for the first time who he really is. Costner has feathers in his hair and feathers in his head. He and his friend Michael Blake (who worked up the material with him in mind and then wrote the novel and the screenplay) are trying to show the last years of the Sioux as an independent nation from the Sioux point of view, and it's probably that sympathy for the Indians that the audience responds to. But Costner is a moviemaking novice: instead of helping us understand the Sioux, he simply makes the Sioux like genial versions of us. This three-hour Western weeper, with its sluggish action and poorly shaped scenes, was made by a bland megalomaniac. (The Indians should have named him Plays with Camera.) Shot in South Dakota; the wide-screen cinematography, by Dean Semler, is spacious and open at times, and there are fine images of buffalo pounding by. With Mary McDonnell, Maury Chaykin, Robert Pastorelli, Graham Greene as Kicking Bird, and Rodney A. Grant as Wind in His Hair.—P.K. (12/17/90) (Eastside Cinema, and Cinema 3. . . . ¶ Bay Cinema, and Embassy; through May 16.)

Defending Your Life—The setting of Albert Brooks' disappointing new comedy is a place called Judgment City, which, according to this picture, is where people from Southern California go after death. Here recently completed lives are examined and evaluated, in a formal proceeding something like a trial: if the defendant wins the case, he moves up the cosmic ladder to a higher form of consciousness. The hero, Daniel Miller (Brooks), a yuppie adman who met his untimely end in a brand-new BMW, naturally believes in upward mobility; in death, as in life, he wants to impress the higher-ups and get that promotion. Although this sounds like an ideal setup for Brooks' kind of comedy, the film is mild-mannered and blandly whimsical, and its rhythms are sluggish. The humor doesn't have any satiric edge, because the character Brooks has written for himself isn't the egotistical, grotesquely needy baby boomer he played in his three previous movies. Brooks is celebrating qualities he used to satirize, and there's something smarmy about his attempt to turn himself into a lovable schlemiel—to cast a warmer, more flattering light on the self that his other pictures mercilessly exposed. Also with Meryl Streep, Lee Grant, and, as the hero's lawyer, Rip Torn, who periodically energizes the movie with some lunatic courtroom theatricality.—T.R. (4/22/91) (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and Loews Paramount. . . . ¶ Cinema I; through May 16.)

The Doors—Oliver Stone's film about the sixties rock group focusses on Jim Morrison, the Doors' lead singer and main songwriter, who died in 1971, at the age of twenty-seven. Morrison (played by Val Kilmer) presented himself as a combination of shaman and *poète maudit*, and he was a star in life and a legend in death because he made the physical, intellectual, and spiritual excesses of the counterculture sexy. The movie is pure exploitation—an extended, self-important freakout. Stone reduces the richly contradictory experience of that period to the myth of Morrison, and, in the process, reduces Morrison and the Doors as well: the movie restricts the viewer's freedom to imagine the sixties culture as anything but a movement with a single voice, or to imagine the Doors as anything but a metaphor. (Kilmer is physically convincing as Morrison, but his performance can be only an impersonation: what the script—by Stone and J. Randal Johnson—gives him to play is the icon, not the man.) For a while, the obviousness and flat-out vulgarity are sort of entertaining, and it might be possible to enjoy the movie as a camp classic if you could ignore the mean-spiritedness that keeps breaking through—the fundamental hostility Stone seems to feel toward his subjects. He wants to turn the audience (and himself) on, but the movie's bad faith and tabloidlike sensibility leave us exhausted and depressed; we feel like voyeurs of our own memories. Also with Meg Ryan, Kathleen Quinlan, and Michael Wincott; the other Doors are played by Kyle MacLachlan, Frank Whaley, and Kevin Dillon.—T.R. (3/11/91) (Worldwide Cinemas.)



Robert Ryan in "The Set-Up" (Biograph Cinema) vs. Robert De Niro in "Raging Bull" (Donnell Library Center)

Eating—Directed by Henry Jaglom. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Cinema Village 12th Street.)

La Femme Nikita—The end of French cinema as we know it. Written and directed by Luc Besson. With Anne Parillaud, Jean-Hugues Anglade, Tcheky Karyo, and (in a cameo) Jeanne Moreau. In French.—T.R. (Angelika Film Center, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

The Five Heartbeats—There isn't a good scene per Heartbeat in this rags-to-sequins story of a Temptations-like five-man singing group. The sweet temper and eager-to-please showmanship of director-star Robert Townsend (who co-wrote the script with Keenen Ivory Wayans) can't compensate for his amateur filmmaking. The early sequences of the quintet's formation have some vaudevillian humor and unzipped energy, but then Townsend crams too much in: racism, "crossover" pressures, drugs, criminality, sexual and professional competition, and, yes, religious redemption. None of the Heartbeats (Townsend, Michael Wright, Leon, Harry J. Lennix, Tico Wells, and, later, John Canada Terrell) score the way Lonette McKee did in the girl-group movie "Sparkle." The only singer who *does*—Tressa Thomas, who plays Townsend's baby sister—performs once and is never heard from again. She tears through a number called "We Haven't Finished Yet." Townsend should have taken that cue: his movie is painfully unfinished.—M.S. (23rd St. West Triplex, and Criterion Center.)

Impromptu—James Lapine's film is an ebullient and absurdly entertaining account of the famous love affair of George Sand and Frédéric Chopin. The script, by Sarah Kernochan, makes Sand's wooing and winning of frail, chaste young Chopin into a busy exercise in farce, with a full complement of deception and setbacks and misunderstandings. Celebrities of the Romantic movement—Delacroix, Musset, and Liszt among them—are put through their paces, along with George and Frédéric, in the salons and ballrooms and country houses of eighteen-thirties France; they issue florid declarations of love, hurl barbed epigrams at their rivals, challenge each other to duels, and, over all, make complete asses of themselves in their pursuit of the sublime. They're lively company. The historical figures in this movie are cartoons, but they're cartoons with recognizable human qualities, and the actors look as if they were having a wonderful time charging around in their period costumes. Hugh Grant's Chopin is a brilliant caricature of the Romantic ideal of the artist; he gives the character an air of befuddled unworldliness, and punctuates his readings with delicately timed tubercular coughs. Judy Davis plays Sand—a great actress in a great role. Davis makes Sand's passionate absurdities both funny and tremendously moving; this woman's willingness to embarrass herself seems a kind of romantic heroism. Also with Bernadette Peters, Julian Sands (as Liszt), Mandy Patinkin (as Musset), Emma Thompson, Ralph Brown (as Delacroix), George Corraface, Anton Rodgers, and Anna Massey. The costumes, by Jenny Beavan, are spectacular.—T.R. (5/6/91) (Beekman, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Metro Cinema.)

Journey Into Fear (1943)—This labyrinthine spy story about smuggling munitions out of Turkey is loaded down with terror hocus-pocus and high-toned conversations. It's a halfhearted—almost fey—film, with a lot of dark atmosphere and unusual camera angles that don't amount to much; the pacing is uncertain, and the suspense doesn't build. Orson Welles, who appears as the Turkish police chief Colonel Haki, is credited, along with Joseph Cotten, for the rather eccentric adaptation of the Eric Ambler novel. Welles also supervised the making of this Mercury Production, though it was at least partly directed by Norman Foster. The cast includes Cotten, Dolores Del Rio, Everett Sloane, Agnes Moorehead, Edgar Barrier, Jack Moss, Ruth Warrick, Richard Bennett as the ship's captain, and Hans Conried as the magician. Cinematography by Karl Strüss; editing by Mark Robson.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; May 19-20.)

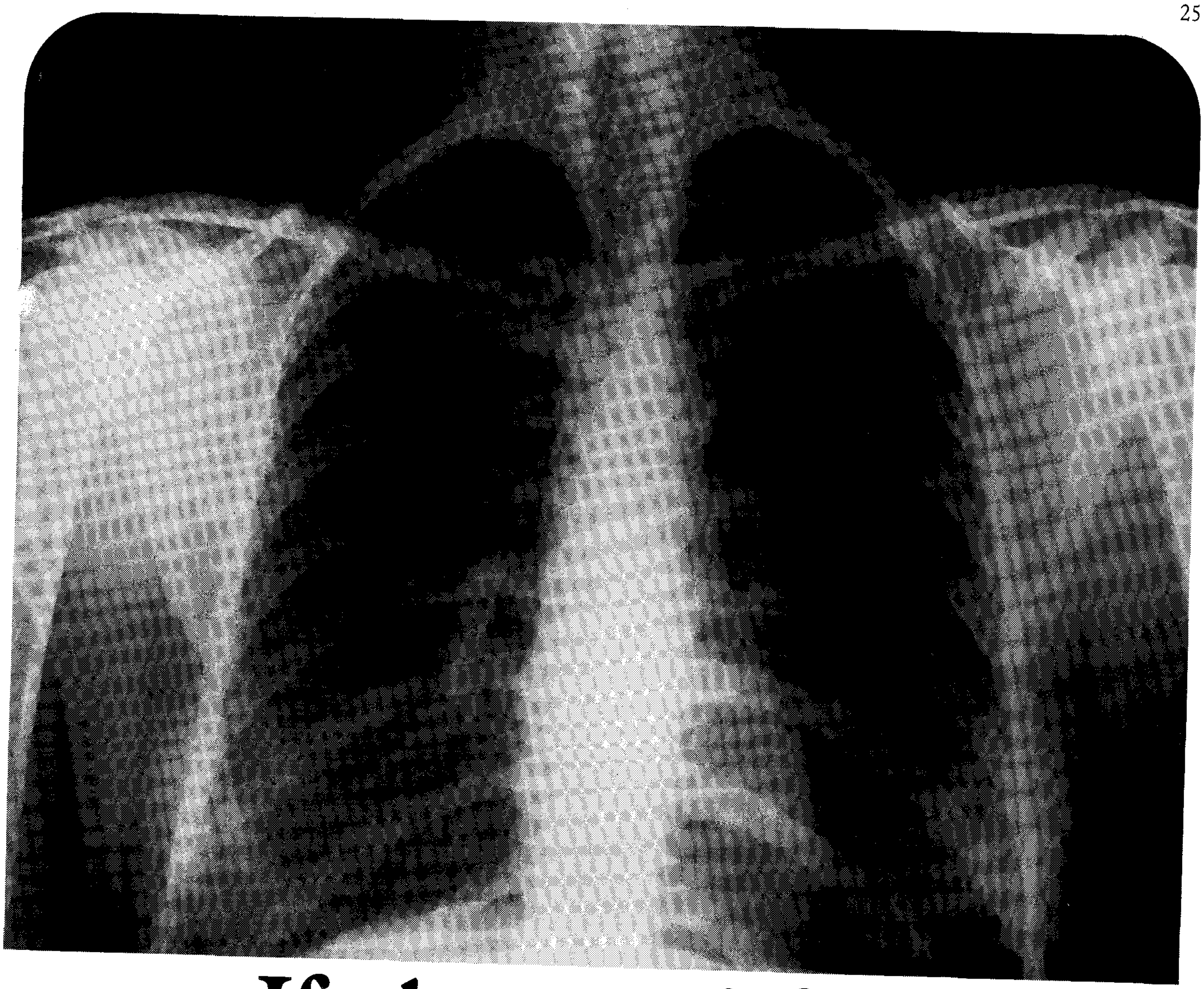
Journey of Hope—It's just another journey into fear: a struggling Turkish farmer takes his wife and young son on a perilous trek to Switzerland, hoping to find "paradise behind the mountains." Black-market operators strip them of their possessions and dignity. The action in this icy muckraker culminates when the family and other Turks cross the Alps at night—without a guide—in a snowstorm. Inspired by a 1988 newspaper article, Xavier Koller's movie is just as topical now—it recalls the Kurdish catastrophe, even though these Turks are economic (not political) refugees, fleeing by the dozens (not the hundreds of thousands). But Koller doesn't give the audience a guide, either; he fails to lay out the issues coherently and dramatically. Intentionally or not, he makes his hero (the dour patriarch) seem foolish for abandoning a harsh but organic rural life. For better or worse—mostly worse—"Journey of Hope" duplicates the Latin-American refugee saga "El Norte": the eerie, harrowing border crossings are the only scenes as powerful as they should be. The rest amount to a lament for the dysfunctional Family of Man. (In Turkish, Italian, and Swiss German, with English and French subtitles.)—M.S. (57th St. Playhouse.)

Ju Dou—It's been compared to James M. Cain, but the postman barely rings once in this tale of adultery Chinese style. In a small mountain village in the twenties, an impotent dye-mill owner (Li Wei), crazed over his lack of an heir, tortures his beautiful young bride (Gong Li). She seeks comfort in the arms of his worker nephew (Li Bao-Tian). There's no compelling plot, only the grinding inevitability of fate and tradition. The director, Zhang Yimou, simply metes out punishment to the lovers, the tyrant—and the audience. The lovers' son does most of the damage. He has the lethal power of the Children of the Damned—unfortunately, without the gimmicky zest of their eerie, glowing eyeballs. Zhang started out as a painter and still photographer. He remains one, devoting more attention to the dye mill's set design than to the story or the characters. The bolts of fabric are colored in subtle, vivid hues; the people are made out of whole cloth. In Mandarin.—M.S. (Lincoln Plaza.)

A Kiss Before Dying—Splat! That's the sound of one rich twin clapping to the ground. Soon, Matt Dillon, her lover-killer, moves on to her identical sister (Sean Young plays both women). The writer-director, James Dearden, botches Ira Levin's creepy best-seller about an upwardly mobile psychopath. (This version is even worse than the 1956 one starring Robert Wagner and Joanne Woodward.) Dillon takes a vacation from his "Drugstore Cowboy" level of acting; Young hasn't earned one yet. He practices somnambulism and she impersonates dual zombies. Dearden's idea of black comedy is to show "Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein" on a hotel TV while Dillon, in the manner of "Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer," dismembers a body in the bathtub. Co-starring Max von Sydow and Joy Lee.—M.S. (34th St. East, Coronet, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and National Twin.)

Mr. & Mrs. Bridge—An adaptation, by the Merchant-Ivory team (the director James Ivory, the producer Ismail Merchant, and the writer Ruth Prawer Jhabvala), of Evan S. Connell's novels about the painfully respectable Bridge family of Kansas City. Walter and India Bridge (Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward) are pure exemplars of the middle: they're middle-aged and middle-class; they live in a medium-sized city in virtually the dead center of the United States; and they are neither truly happy nor consciously unhappy. They're monsters of moderation. At the beginning of the film, Ivory seems eerily in tune with the novels' distinctive sensibility. The picture gets by, initially, on its strange mood of chilling coziness, and when we tire of that—and we do, because it doesn't change or develop—the actors keep us engaged a while longer. Newman doesn't try to soften the character, or to distance himself from it with exaggerated effects, and his scrupulousness pays off. The character seems not more likable but more human than it does in the novels; by very simple means, Newman enables us to understand Mr. Bridge's insensitivity and emotional ineptitude. And Woodward, too, gives a delicate, subtle performance; she embodies a foolish woman vividly and unpatronizingly. But the screenplay retains the static quality of the books' construction, so at a certain point the scenes begin to feel arbitrary. And Ivory's perspective on the material seems to become clouded by a storm of minutiae—a surfeit of period detail. (The action takes place in the late thirties and early forties.) In the end, the Bridges aren't large enough either to move us or to terrify us: they're the Ambersons without the magnificence. Also with Blythe Danner, Kyra Sedgwick, Robert Sean Leonard, Margaret Welsh, and Simon Callow.—T.R. (12/3/90) (Quad Cinema.)

Mister Johnson—An adaptation, directed by Bruce Beresford, of a 1939 Joyce Cary novel about a young Nigerian who works for British colonists in a remote rural outpost. The title character (played by Maynard Eziashi) is an outsized, broadly conceived comic invention—a man who seems to identify more strongly with his employers than with his countrymen. He composes grandiose songs of praise



If a doctor can't find asbestos damage here, a lawyer will.

These days, asbestos litigation is fast becoming a giant grab bag. And nobody's grabbing more than America's personal injury lawyers. These opportunists are rounding up workers all across the country, herding them into vans equipped with x-ray and breathing machinery, and examining them for traces of asbestos-related disease.

The lawyers who invented this screening technique brought suits in 12 states on behalf of 8,000 tire workers. Yet in a May 1990 opinion, a Kansas City district judge called their litigation project "a professional farce…The process makes a mockery of the practices of law and medicine."

As Forbes pointed out in a February 18th cover story, it's not just lawyers that are at fault, but the vagueness of the law itself. Consider the case of a mechanic who had occasional contact with tractor parts containing not-so-dangerous chrysotile asbestos. When he died from cancer, lawyers saw to it that his wife received a large settlement from the companies that made those parts. But in all likelihood, his death was caused by deadly amphibole asbestos, which he was exposed to when he worked at a naval shipyard during World War II.

Right now, the U.S. has 115,000 pending asbestos cases. Forbes has learned that between 65% and 80% of the claimants involved in them have symptomless maladies unrelated to asbestos. Then why is it that asbestos claims have already forced 15 companies into bankruptcy? And why is it that litigation could end up costing companies, and their insurers, as much as $100 billion?

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Ray Milland and Jane Wyman

Before "The Lost Weekend" premièred, in 1945 (it plays May 17-18 at Film Forum 2), the entire career of Ray Milland rhymed with bland. But as Don Birnam, the alcoholic would-be writer in the film version of Charles Jackson's famous novel, he gave a lacerating performance. He sharpened the skills he'd mastered as a light comedian and romantic leading man, and pitted them against each other. Birnam uses his too easy charm to coast between drinks. Even when he's alert, there's something suspicious about him—his matinée-idol twinkle can't camouflage his peripheral pursuit of the next shot or bottle. The action is unsparing, whether Birnam is hiding from his roommate brother and keeper (Philip Terry), pouring out his self-loathing to his girlfriend (Jane Wyman), or butting up against the disapproval of his bartender (Howard da Silva). Director Billy Wilder and Milland build the characterization cunningly, so that Milland's intensity increases as Birnam drifts deeper into a weekend bender. (Wilder co-wrote the script with Charles Brackett, who produced.)

Part of the movie's pull is that you want to see if Milland will go all the way with the role. He goes as far as the script permits him. Birnam's adolescent illusions of literary glory explain away his alcoholism. Still, the movie has a clean line of attack and grimy tensions. It's filled with semi-journalistic coups (Birnam's search up and down Third Avenue for an open pawnshop on Yom Kippur, his stay in Bellevue—both filmed on location), and with tersely written, shrewdly cast supporting parts—especially Frank Faylen as a malicious nurse and Doris Dowling as the hard-bitten, sympathetic B-girl who drops last (and penultimate) syllables. It may not be a work of great depth, but should you miss it? As Dowling's hooker would say, "Don't be ridic."

to "England, my home" (he's never been there), and he serves the stolid, pipe-smoking colonial district officer with ferocious enthusiasm. For Johnson, the ways of the white man's civilization are the elements of a romance, an epic song full of color and grand adventure: he looks at the world through the eyes of a poet, and transforms all he sees. The subject of the novel isn't the conflict between the culture of West Africa and that of the imperialist occupiers; it's the contrast between the wild fertility of an artist's imagination and the barrenness of his actual circumstances. The movie is skillful, handsome, and consistently enjoyable, but its studied style makes Cary's story seem a far more conventional colonial satire than it really is. For the most part, Beresford directs like an intelligent man who just isn't quite getting the point. Eziashi, however, is a splendid Johnson: the movie's few surviving traces of the novel's complex wit are all contained in fleeting expressions on the actor's broad, smiling face. Also with Pierce Brosnan, Edward Woodward, Femi Fatoba, Beatie Edney, Bela Enahoro, Nick Reding, and Kwabena Manso. Screenplay by William Boyd; cinematography by Peter James.—T.R. (4/8/91) (Worldwide Cinemas.)

NEW JACK CITY—A Saturday night not-so-special, with juicy bits and pieces. Mario Van Peebles' primitive but energetic anti-drug melodrama stars Wesley Snipes as a self-made crack king, Ice-T and Judd Nelson as the cops who try to bring him down, and Van Peebles himself as their boss, modestly named Stone. The screenwriters, Thomas Lee Wright and Barry Michael Cooper, portray Snipes' charismatic villain as a brutal ghetto cousin of the eighties white-collar criminals. He believes that a man must "rob to get rich in the Reagan era." He also must extort and murder. In the most jolting sequence, Snipes turns an entire building into a crack apartment house. The narrative is a hash. With its combination of alienation and derring-do, "New Jack City" is like *Melvin* Van Peebles' "Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song" and Brian De Palma's "Scarface" (it contains clips from both) crossed with "Serpico" and earnest TV cops-and-robbers series. When the drug lord's romantic problems come to the fore, you wonder if you missed an episode. As a whole, the movie resembles sixties biker movies as well as seventies blaxploitation films: the camera keeps riding the action, and the cast is loose and entertaining.—M.S. (23rd St. West Triplex, and West Side Cinema.)

THE OBJECT OF BEAUTY—Jake (John Malkovich) and Tina (Andie MacDowell) are a glamorous American couple camping out in a suite in a swank London hotel. They're unable to settle their account, which when the movie begins stands at about six thousand pounds, because Jake, a speculator, has blown all his money on a bad investment. Jake and Tina are unmarried and have no permanent address; they're charming, attractive drifters, getting by on style. In a sense, they're throwbacks to the sophisticated and slightly disreputable couples who floated airily through thirties romantic comedies: no-strings types who stick together for the best shallow reasons—for sex and laughs and the shared kick of living the high life without having to work too hard. The picture, written and directed by Michael Lindsay-Hogg, is conceived as high-style fluff, but it never delivers quite as much irresponsible fun as it promises. It's like a Lubitsch movie without the speed and the grace and the blissful inconsequentiality. Malkovich, however, is as unaccountably magnetic here as he was in "Dangerous Liaisons." His performance is a postmodern mutation of thirties style, an ungodly hybrid of William Powell and Boris Karloff, and it's sensationally funny. This is as original a piece of acting as you'll ever see in a romantic comedy. The supporting players are an unusually lively group: Lolita Davidovich, Peter Riegert, Joss Ackland, and Bill Paterson.—T.R. (4/22/91) (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Regency. . . . ¶ Manhattan Twin; through May 16.)

OSCAR—Fallen archness. This farce about a Prohibition racketeer named Snaps Provolone (Sylvester Stallone) is the kind of film in which an accountant named Little Anthony (Vincent Spano) is sure to drive an Imperial. As Snaps tries to go legit and marry off his restless daughter, the plot develops a bad case of mistaken identities. Written by Michael Barrie and Jim Mulholland (from a play by Claude Magnier), the film has farce mechanics but no fuel: the one thing at stake is Snaps' comical pride, and as Stallone plays him Snaps has no crackle, no pop. The cast includes Ornella Muti, Marisa Tomei, Peter Riegert, Richard Romanus, Don Ameche, Kurtwood Smith, and (in bit parts) Yvonne De Carlo and the always juicy Kirk Douglas. Several performers breathe levity into dead air—Harry Shearer and Martin Ferrero (as Snaps' tailors), Tim Curry (as his elocution teacher), and Eddie Bracken as a snitch with a stutter so extreme that it shades into mime. The director, John Landis, doesn't put a spin on the plot tricks—he piles them on like Lego blocks.—M.S. (Gramercy, Cinema II, Quad Cinema, Guild, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex. . . . ¶ 86th Street East Twin; through May 16.)

PARIS IS BURNING—Jennie Livingston's documentary about gay black and Latino men who compete in drag balls is a beautiful piece of work—lively, intelligent, exploratory. The drag queens we see here seem to be holding up a mirror to the world of the empowered as they see it in movies, TV shows, and magazines. In the ballroom, some present themselves as elegant, glamorous women in designer outfits, and walk with the hip-swinging slouch of runway models, while others adopt more mundane personas: college students (of both sexes); military men; Wall Street businessmen; aristocrats at play, dressed for yachting or riding to hounds. The criteria by which all these turns are judged is verisimilitude—"realness." The material is almost too rich, too suggestive. Everything about the ball culture signifies so blatantly and so promiscuously that the movie induces a kind of semiotic daze. Livingston is smart enough not to reduce her subjects to the sum of their possible meanings, perhaps because she realizes that the way the drag performers manipulate image and fetishes and the iconography of popular culture is for many of them a sophisticated form of humor. The most self-aware of the gay men in this picture revel in the ironies of their social and sexual identities, and Livingston makes us appreciate the comic grace and the strange wisdom of that approach. Like all the best documentary filmmakers, she does her subjects the honor of allowing them to retain some of their mystery. Edited by Jonathan Oppenheim.—T.R. (3/25/91) (Film Forum. . . . ¶ Whitney Museum; May 18-19.)

PRETTY POISON (1968)—An unobtrusive little psychological thriller, subtle and very smart. Anthony Perkins gives what may be his most sensitively conceived performance; he's a character who develops from a quirky, sneaky, funny boy into a decent, sympathetic man. He toys with fantasies but knows they're fantasies. Tuesday Weld plays a small-town girl, crazy for excitement, who accepts his fantasies in a matter-of-fact way and proceeds to act on them. Lorenzo Semple, Jr., wrote a beauty of a script (based on Stephen Geller's novel "She Let Him Continue"); the horror in the movie isn't just in the revelation of what the pretty young girl is capable of—it's in your awareness that the man's future is being destroyed. Directed by Noel Black. With John Randolph and Beverly Garland. Shot on location in western Massachusetts; the river that is carrying poisonous red dye is the once "mighty" Housatonic.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; May 22.)

REVERSAL OF FORTUNE—An entertainingly trashy sick-joke docudrama about how Claus von Bülow's conviction for trying to kill his superrich wife was overturned on appeal through the brainpower of the Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz and his team of students and former students. Jeremy Irons' von Bülow is a pop conception of a decadent aristocrat, and the crowd-pleasing satirical subtext is that the heirs and heiresses of the great fortunes are useless, bored, unloving, and unloved. The fun here is that Irons' performance is a masterly conceit. His von Bülow is a depraved cuckoo; he simply can't resist playing ghoulish comedian and making Dershowitz (Ron Silver) his stooge. The script, by Nicholas Kazan, is skillfully constructed, but it's based on Dershowitz's book about the case, and he's the protagonist—the crusading lawyer searching for evidence of innocence. Silver's Dershowitz seems to be overdosing on proud sentimental Jewishness.

(That this is a positive stereotype makes it no less a stereotype.) The direction, by Barbet Schroeder, is assured but often impersonal and emptily energetic. With Glenn Close (very effective as Sunny von Bülow, the comatose narrator), Christine Baranski as Andrea Reynolds, Julie Hagerty (uncredited) as Alexandra Isles, and Stephen Mailer, Annabella Sciorra, Uta Hagen, and Fisher Stevens. Music by Mark Isham.—P.K. (11/19/90) (Quad Cinema.)

A Room with a View (1986)—Adapted from the early novel by E. M. Forster, this is a whimsical social comedy about a muddled young English girl (Helena Bonham Carter) who desires yet fears sexual love; she runs away from the man (Julian Sands) who stirs her emotions, and becomes engaged to a rich twit (Daniel Day-Lewis). Bonham Carter lacks the carriage and presence of a trained actress, and Sands, though likable, is playing Forster's flimsy—almost abstract—dream of a natural, uninhibited lover, and is rather vague. But the movie is well paced, and it never loses its hold on a viewer's affections, because it's so thoroughly inhabited. The actors who circulate around the heroine create a whirring atmosphere—a comic hum. They include Denholm Elliott (playing the novel's resident saint), Maggie Smith, Judi Dench, Simon Callow, and Rosemary Leach; the young Italian lovers are played by Isabella Celani and Lucca Rossi. Full of allusions to art and literature, the movie is more than a little precious, but it's a piece of charming foolishness. It was produced by Ismail Merchant and directed by James Ivory, from a script by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala that pares down the text skillfully and takes much of its lively, dizzy dialogue directly from Forster. Shot in England and Florence, by Tony Pierce-Roberts.—P.K. (Cinema Village 3rd Avenue; starting May 19.)

The Set-Up (1949)—This intelligently modest, low-budget film about a shabby, aging prizefighter (Robert Ryan) is generally considered a classic. It's not a great movie, or even a very good one (it's rather mechanical), but it touches one's experience in a way that makes it hard to forget. (Maybe that's why so many movies have imitated it, even though it wasn't a commercial success.) Based on a narrative poem by Joseph Moncure March and written by Art Cohn, it was directed by Robert Wise and shot (by Milton Krasner) in actual locations. Ryan—his face never more craggily heroic than in defeat—raised the picture above its poetry-of-realism aspirations. With Audrey Totter as the fighter's perceptive, harried wife, George Tobias, Wallace Ford, and Alan Baxter.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; May 21-22.)

The Silence of the Lambs—Adapted from a novel by Thomas Harris, Jonathan Demme's thriller is artful pulp—tabloid material treated with intelligence and care and a weird kind of sensitivity. The heroine, Clarice Starling (Jodie Foster), is an earnest F.B.I. trainee who is selected to interview Dr. Hannibal Lecter (Anthony Hopkins), a psychiatrist who is also a famous mass murderer; her superiors hope that Lecter's twisted expertise can somehow be used to help them catch a serial killer known as Buffalo Bill, who flays his victims. In the course of the movie, these conversations between the trainee and the psychiatrist turn into edgy, complex transactions in which she reveals pieces of her inner life in return for his hints on how to find the killer. Hopkins plays the monster with a fine, cold relish: he gives the character a mesmeric animal stillness, the terrifying opacity of a cobra. And the impact of his performance is heightened by its contrast with everything surrounding it: the scrupulous realism of Demme's style, the mundane details of police procedure, and, in particular, the emotional transparence of the heroine. Demme keeps our attention on Starling and her shifting reactions to the world, and his most striking achievement in this picture is his direction of Jodie Foster. The suspense of this manhunt isn't of the straight-ahead kind we're used to: it's reflective, oscillating between approach and avoidance—it has an unnerving intimacy. Also with Scott Glenn, Ted Levine (as Buffalo Bill), Anthony Heald, and Brooke Smith. The screenplay, which is extremely faithful to the novel, is by Ted Tally.—T.R. (2/25/91) (Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews New York Twin, Waverly, and Embassy.)

Spartacus (1960)—This may be the best-paced and most slyly entertaining of all the decadent-ancient-Rome spectacular films. It's a great big cartoon drama, directed by Stanley Kubrick, with Kirk Douglas at his most muscular as the slave gladiator Spartacus, who leads a rebellion of his fellow-slaves against the might of Rome. Spartacus makes some conscientious speeches—out of Howard Fast (who wrote the novel) by way of Dalton Trumbo (who did the screenplay)—but there's so much else going on that it's easy to brush off the moralizing. Laurence Olivier is Spartacus' antagonist, Crassus, a devious patrician who wants to rule Rome in the name of order—he is designed as a supersubtle Fascist. Crassus is a wonderfully gaudy character: he takes Tony Curtis, a young "singer of songs," as his sexual favorite, but he also has a fancy for the slave girl whom Spartacus loves—Jean Simmons. She has never been more beautiful, and the emotions that appear on her humor-filled face are blessedly sane. Peter Ustinov is superb as a slave dealer, who along with his grovelling sycophancy and his merchant's greed has his resentments; and Charles Laughton, amusingly wide in his toga, is a wily old Roman senator. (The two of them have a chat about the beneficial effects of corpulence.) As a gladiator who is Spartacus' friend and who is forced to fight him, Woody Strode has the quietest, most elegant physical presence in the movie. Cinematography by Russell Metty; music by Alex North. Hearst's San Simeon was used for some of the locations. (196 minutes).—P.K. (Ziegfeld.)

Truly, Madly, Deeply—A lovely, original comedy about a young woman, named Nina (Juliet Stevenson), who is obsessed with the memory of her dead lover. The writer and director, Anthony Minghella, establishes an unusual, delicately varied mood, and the film moves gracefully from a realistic mode into a fantastic one. One night, Nina's lover, Jamie (Alan Rickman), reappears in her flat, and his presence seems perfectly natural to us: he has emerged from a setting that is already charged with the heroine's feelings for him. Once he's back, she has to confront, in the most concrete way, what it would really mean to live the rest of her life with a dead guy as her significant other: the movie is less a ghost story than a weird kind of domestic comedy. Minghella draws us into a fresh and startlingly humane vision of modern urban life; the details of the heroine's way of living always seem to point beyond themselves, and there's an emotional unity to everything we see. He writes dialogue that sounds casual but somehow takes us straight to the heart of his work's larger concerns, and he directs the actors beautifully. Rickman is unexpectedly romantic here, and very funny besides. And Stevenson gives a radiant performance: she doesn't have a false moment, or a boring one, in the whole picture. Also with Michael Maloney, Christopher Rózycki, Stella Maris, David Ryall, Deborah Findlay, and the always marvellous Bill Paterson. Cinematography by Remi Adefarasin.—T.R. (5/6/91) (Plaza.)

The Vanishing—George Sluizer's film has a simple, powerful thriller hook: a young Dutch woman, Saskia (the radiant Johanna Ter Steege), vacationing in the South of France with her boyfriend, Rex (Gene Bervoets), walks into a highway rest stop to buy a soda and beer and never comes back. Rex's search for Saskia, which takes place over several years, produces suspense of an unusually melancholy kind. This fiendishly intelligent little movie is adapted from a novel called "The Golden Egg," by the Dutch writer Tim Krabbé (who collaborated with Sluizer on the adaptation), and its form is essentially literary. It's a sophisticated example of the sort of hermetic intellectual mysteries that Borges is famous for: the fates of Saskia and Rex are worked out with an almost geometric precision. But the movie's rigor isn't alienating, and its symmetries are evocative rather than merely clever. The film is about ordinary lives interrupted, hijacked out of time, and Sluizer, with documentary-style attentiveness to detail, does justice to the varied beauty of ordinariness. The narrative is constructed with flawless elegance, but the movie is far less self-contained than it seems: traces of deep feeling keep escaping from the artifice, like puffs of breath into cold, thin air. Not many thrillers have the sort of suggestiveness this picture has. It's a small classic. Bernard-Pierre Donnadieu gives a chilling performance as the perverse, enigmatic villain. In Dutch and French.—T.R. (1/28/91) (Bleecker Movie House; through May 16.)

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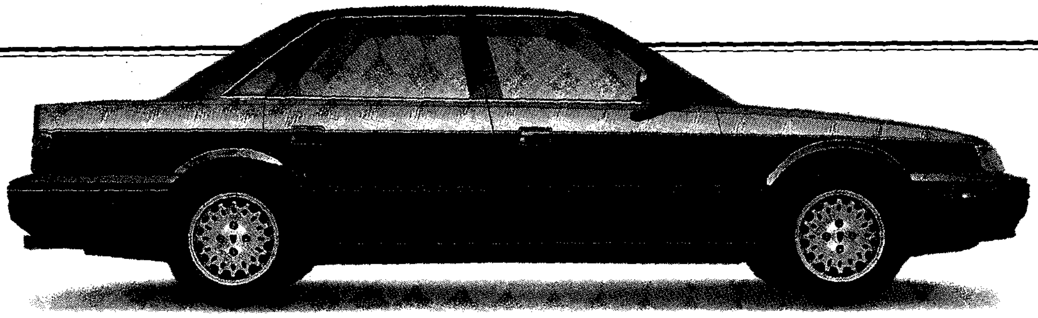

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

A FRIEND writes:

I love *Time* cover stories, the kind that take up big, general issues (the death of God, the generation gap) and put a distinctive, collective-journalism spin on them. So I was delighted when, a few weeks ago, *Time* had a picture on its cover of a couple of old suède lace-up boots, the front wheel of a ten-speed bike, a crocheted porch rug, and a weather-beaten window frame, to announce that America had taken up "The Simple Life." ("Rejecting the rat race, Americans get back to basics" was the cover line.) Inside, *Time* told the case histories of Americans, living in communities from Frazier Park, California, to Burlington, Vermont, who have decided to live the new, simpler life. There were photographs of the simplified Americans, and photographs of the simple stuff they're buying, accompanied by color-coded sidebars comparing the fast-track, status-obsessed lives we were leading back in the eighties with the scaled-down, spiritual lives we are leading now. For instance, Barry Blake, a liquor-industry executive, "was living lavishly in a Manhattan penthouse and scrambling up the career ladder." Now he "runs an apple winery and cider mill in Vermont." On another page we meet a former mutual-fund manager named Peter Lynch having breakfast with his three daughters: the girls are eating cereal while Dad makes them peanut-butter sandwiches. "Instead of picking stocks from dawn to dusk," *Time* explained, "Peter Lynch gets up early to make peanut-butter sandwiches for his three daughters." On that page was another comprehensive sidebar, depicting all the stuff we did and bought eighteen months ago, back in the materialist, godless eighties, juxtaposed with all the simple, virtuous stuff we are going in for now. "Shaving brushes and soap edge out canned foam," we learned (there was a photograph of a shaving brush and a jar of soap from Caswell-Massey next to one of a can of Noxzema Menthol); also, Monopoly has replaced video games; cloth diapers are replacing disposables; beer is hot, champagne is not; Hondas are more popular than BMWs; and "hanging out with the family beats the high life." *Time* told us flatly, "People who used to meet at trendy bars now trade bon mots while sorting their garbage into the appropriate bins at the public dump."

Time also introduced us to Marsha Bristow Bostick, of Columbus, Ohio, who "remembers noticing with alarm last summer" the plans of her three-year-old daughter, Betsy: "to take ballet lessons, followed by bride lessons." They helped inspire Mrs. Bostick to quit her hundred-and-fifty-thousand-dollar-a-year job as a marketing executive. Later in the article, however, Mrs. Bostick reappeared and confessed that back in the eighties she and Mr. Bostick used to spend their time "cooking wonderful things" but now are "eating SpaghettiOs, fried chicken, lots of terrible-for-you casseroles covered in cheese."

If you looked closely at the layouts, you could detect other cracks in the smooth façade of the new simplicity. Barry Blake, for instance, was shown wearing a sweatshirt with a George Lois-style corporate logo on it reading "Vermont Hard Cider"; he is clearly a former liquor executive with the idea that there is a niche waiting to be filled with designer cider. Peter Lynch was wearing a striped shirt, a gabardine suit, and a red "power" tie as he made those peanut-butter sandwiches, and if you really studied the picture you realized that he has suspiciously poor peanut-butter technique: in a burst of "natural" affection, he has leaned over to kiss the head of his youngest daughter, and meanwhile his jacket is about to get mired in the jar.

Still, it occurred to me that, for practically the first time I could remember, I was behind the curve of a *Time* cover story. Deciding that I had better go after some of the "recyclable, cheap, plain and nostalgic" stuff that *Time* had so helpfully listed in the piece, I called up Caswell-Massey and asked how much it would cost to buy a shaving brush and a jar of soap just like the ones in the sidebar. "Well, that's our almond-lather shave cream, and it costs thirteen dollars and fifty cents," the woman at Caswell-Massey said. "And our shaving brushes range from thirty dollars to three hundred dollars." I asked her what the three-hundred-dollar brush was like—I said it must be

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JERRY LEWIS
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pretty simple—and she said that it was just "a certain kind of brush." The high-tech "sophisticated" Noxzema shaving cream that *Time* condemns, by the way, cost me three dollars and *fifty-nine cents*—and that's paying top dollar, over at the Korean's on Spring Street.

My wife and I don't have a baby, but I looked in the Yellow Pages anyway, and called up Bottom Line Diaper Service and asked how much it would cost to get authentic, simple diaper service. The woman there explained to me that I had to sign up for the "start-up kit," which would give me six diaper covers, a special hamper for cloth diapers, and five weeks of service, and would cost me a hundred and eleven dollars and forty cents. The Korean-market price for a package of forty-four Huggies is $14.99; make it seventy-five dollars for five weeks' worth.

Time opposed "comfy, cheap" Norm Abram, of the PBS show "This Old House," to Robin Leach. Well, I am Norm Abram's biggest fan, but I fork over a fifty-dollar pledge each year to keep Norm coming at me (O.K., I get a Channel Thirteen tote bag, too), while Robin I get free. A Monopoly game at F. A. O. Schwarz costs at least eighteen dollars and can go as high as forty-five; at Ben's Pizza, down the street from my apartment, you can still play a video game for a quarter. Even some of the comparisons that seem self-evident don't stand up to scrutiny. How do you know that the champagne some unsimplified people are pouring isn't Chandon Blanc de Noirs, from California, which runs about fourteen dollars a bottle? So figure about two dollars a glass, while that big, frosty mug of suds *Time* is showing is definitely some kind of European lager, with the wet, drafty look you get only in some tony First Avenue tavern. I'm guessing three-fifty, minimum, per glass.

Here is my unofficial tally of *Time*'s "expensive, high tech and sophisticated" stuff, as against the new simplicity's "recyclable, cheap, plain and nostalgic" stuff. I am leaving out of these calculations the Honda-versus-BMW comparison, because I can't drive, and, besides, nobody in New York can afford any kind of car. On the other hand, I'm throwing in the full retail value of the Channel Thirteen tote bag. Anyway, this is what I get.

"Recyclable, cheap, plain and nostalgic" goods (including top-of-the-line shaving brush): $459.40.

"Expensive, high tech and sophisticated" equivalents: $145.83.

So I have resigned myself to being trapped forever in the eighties. I don't think I can afford the simple life.

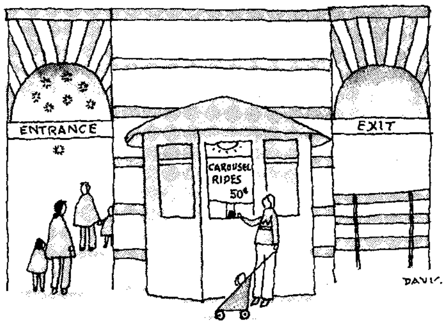
• •

Mysteries

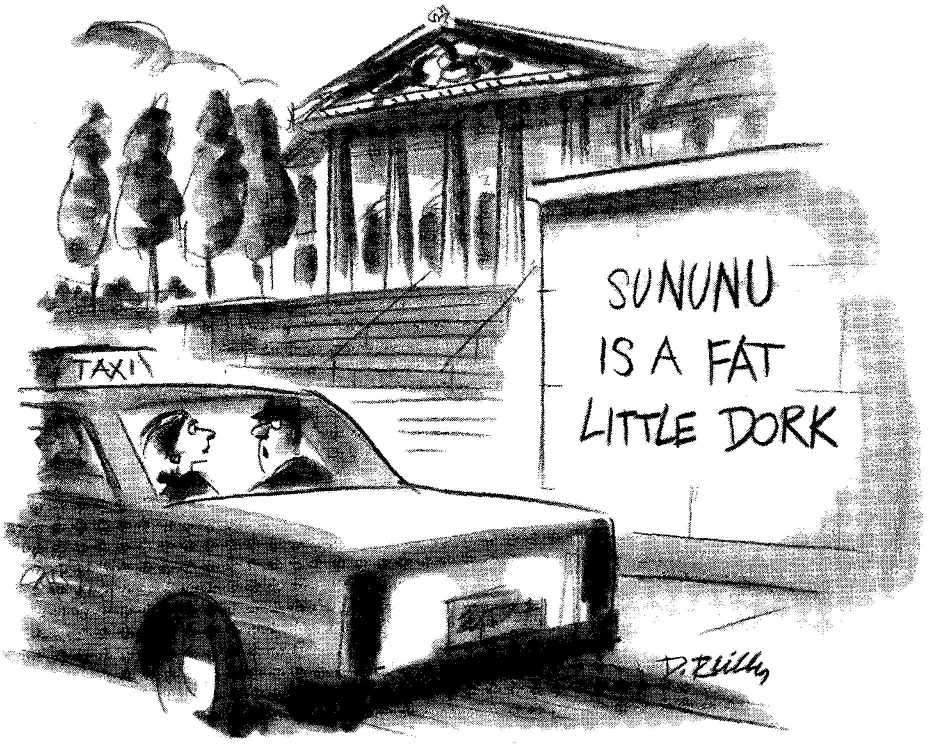
THE fact that we don't remember having a spherical sensor implanted in our nose by a small gray being from a distant galaxy is—if you think about it—a kind of proof. After all, the being would not want us to go around telling everyone that we have a ball in our head which transmits our thoughts to Andromeda. No, the being would want us to forget the whole thing. It's the same with photographs. People often say, "How come photographs of U.F.O.s are always fuzzy?" Well, did it ever occur to those people that U.F.O.s may emit a kind of radiation that registers on film as fuzziness?

This point, we admit, hadn't occurred to us, either, until we heard Philip J. Imbrogno, a writer, teacher, and U.F.O. expert, give a lecture recently at the Heart Center for Attitudinal Healing, in Bethel, Connecticut. The Heart Center is a spiritual-counselling facility. It offers programs in astral projection, t'ai chi, miracles, neurolinguistic programming, U.F.O.s, and other subjects, and it has sponsored a support group for people who have had near-death experiences. It is run by Loretta Chaney, a kung-fu expert and psychic, and her husband, Scott, who is studying for a degree in counselling.

When we first saw Imbrogno, we were taken aback. He looked *exactly* the way we had thought he would. The mustache, the thinning hair—every detail was eerily familiar, as though we had encountered him before, perhaps while travelling against our will in a semi-conscious state at many times the speed of light. Then, suddenly, we remembered: we had just come across a picture of him, there at the Center, in a book called "Night Siege," which he wrote with Bob Pratt, a reporter, and the late Dr. J. Allen Hynek, who coined the expression "close encounter of the third kind." "Night Siege" was published in 1987. It concerns a series of U.F.O. sightings that took place in the New York area over a period of about four years, beginning a few minutes before midnight on New Year's Eve of 1982. The Hudson Valley sightings, as they are known, are very famous in U.F.O. circles. While they were taking place, Imbrogno wrote, thousands of people in New York and Connecticut saw (and in some cases were taken aboard) triangular or boomerang-shaped flying objects that scientists and the government are still powerless to explain.



As Imbrogno talked, he showed slides and a videotape. The videotape was of some small, jiggly lights that, Imbrogno told us, belonged to a Hudson Valley U.F.O. The slides for the most part depicted fuzzy U.F.O.s, places where people had reported spotting U.F.O.s, and charts. One of the charts listed the six basic categories of U.F.O. sightings: nocturnal lights, daylight disks, radar visuals, close encounters of the first kind (sightings of objects within a distance of two hundred yards), close encounters of the second kind (sightings of objects and also of physical traces they have left, such as strange residues or burn marks on the ground), and close encounters of the third kind (sightings of extraterrestrial entities). Close encounters of the third kind, Imbrogno said, almost invariably involve one of two kinds of entities: little gray guys who are four or five feet tall and big blond guys with long hair and blue eyes. The gray guys tend to be the ones who abduct people. (Imbrogno and other experts sometimes refer to U.F.O.-related abductions as close encounters of the fourth kind.) The blond guys, according to Imbrogno, "don't seem to have spaceships, but they appear and disappear, and they seem to impart wisdom, and so on." In one such case, he said, a tall blond extraterrestrial angel named Donestra,



"I've had the growing conviction that the level and quality of our political dialogue have been eroding in recent years."

who was a native of a planet called Solarian, made repeated visits to a middle-aged grocery-store guard in Putnam Lake, New York, and enabled the guard, who had no artistic or scientific training, to draw diagrams of a high-influx resonator, an external-stimulator-control device, a photon accelerator, and other pieces of equipment previously unknown on earth. Donestra also caused the guard to write many pages in a strange-looking script, which Imbrogno said bears a certain resemblance to ancient Sumerian but is otherwise unintelligible.

At this point in Imbrogno's presentation, we were beginning to feel pretty creepy, so we turned around to look at the people sitting behind us. There were about twenty of them, including a middle-aged woman who, along with several other people in the room, had given a little snort of incredulity when Imbrogno said, "The official explanation was small aircraft flying in formation." She gave a similar snort later, when he said that Steven Spielberg, the director of the movie "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," had refused to donate money to U.F.O. research.

When Imbrogno's lecture ended, most of the people in the audience hung around to ask questions, share their own U.F.O. experiences, or buy copies of "Night Siege." We chatted with a man named Dennis, who said that his own encounter (of the first kind) had been "a wonderful experience" and that he had discussed it on various talk shows. A little later, we bought an autographed copy of Imbrogno's book and ordered a copy of a typed update that he has been working on. Imbrogno told us that his recent research efforts have been somewhat limited, because of a teaching job that takes up a lot of his time, and also because book royalties aren't all they're cracked up to be. We said something sympathetic, and then, driven by an overwhelming impulse that seemed to arise in a place both deep inside us and far, far away, we asked whether any close encounters of the fourth kind had ever been reported in New York City. He said that many such encounters had been reported, and that the reports had come from Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx. "There have even been cases where people have been taken right out of their apartments by a beam of light," he said. "Why it goes unnoticed, I don't know."

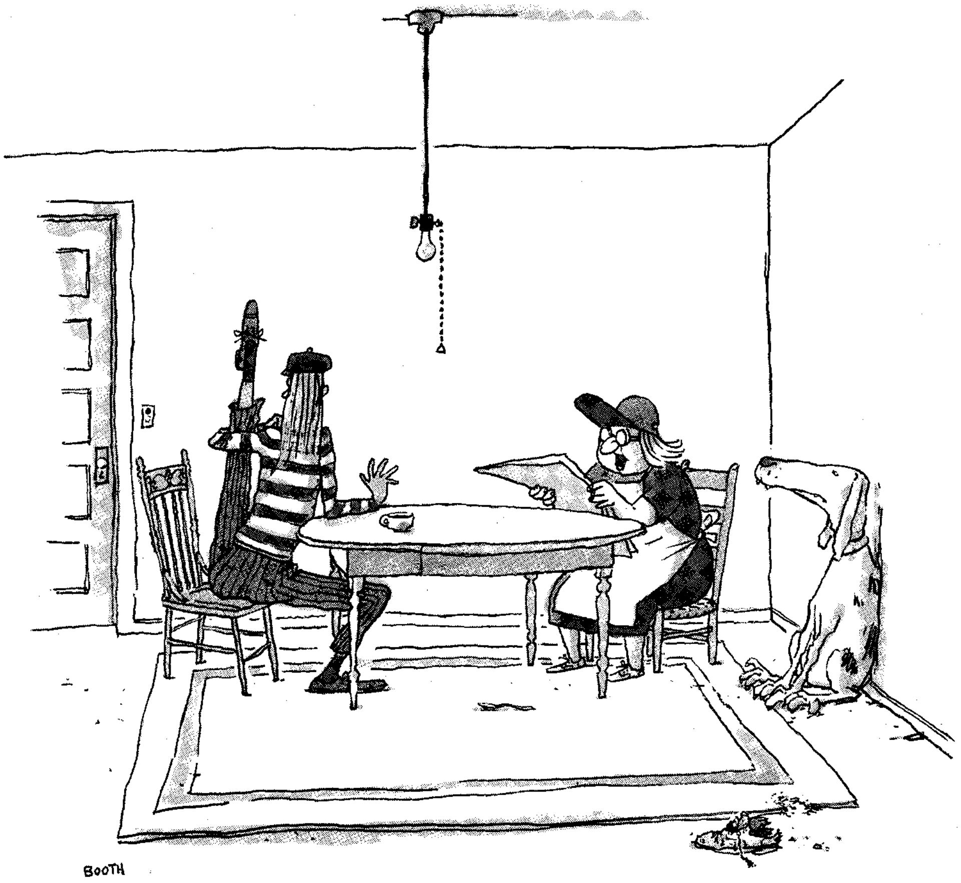
Alone

A WOMAN we know writes:

On a recent Saturday morning, when the members of my household were scattering in different directions, I put on some casual clothes and comfortable shoes and headed for the Battery Park Ferry to Ellis Island. I arrived at the park line for ferry tickets at twelve-thirty, and within moments of joining it I heard a voice on a loudspeaker announce, "Attention, visitors. The first boat you are likely to board is 2 P.M." I looked around to see people's reactions; they ranged from amusement to resignation but did not include surprise or anger. A big part of the relative calm may have been attributable to the balmy weather. Several people in front of me began to discuss the difference between the most populous nation on earth and the country with the densest population. As they spoke, I came to understand that they were related—a young married couple and the woman's mother. Most of the visitors I saw on the trip belonged to small family groups like this, though, occasionally I spotted a pair of teenage girls on a lark, or a couple obviously falling in love. The solitary visitor, like me, was rare.

On the other hand, there were many solitary venders, musicians, and acrobats practicing their skills in the park for the line snaking toward the docks. One man had set up an elaborate array of steel drums, with a cardboard sign in front of it that related the history of the steel drum. The history read, in part, "Invented in 1946 by Ellie Manette who went on to make other types such as tenor, double tenors, alto guitars, and bass. The homeland of this instrument is Trinidad and Tobago. Some people say it sound like a piano and other a harp. You be the judge. Don't forget your contribution is well appreciated." I didn't get to hear this musician play, but I did see a tumbler executing hair-raising stunts on bare concrete, and a dancer-contortionist, and I heard a singer-comic performing a calypso version of "New York, New York," which was enthusiastically received by the line. "Remember," he said, waving toward a group of men with identical black display cases that contained scores of glittering timepieces. "You're in New York City, the only place in the world where you can get a Rolex watch for twenty-five dollars."

Around two, I got on a boat. As I walked up the gangplank, I decided that it was more important to have full access to light and air on the top deck than to secure a seat on a lower, partly enclosed level. By two-thirty, the ferry had discharged its passengers for Liberty Island and was heading toward Ellis. By three, I was walking up the immigration center's front steps. I headed for the great hall on the second floor, where I knew from photographs that there would be benches. I took a seat on one, and for twenty minutes or so I studied the grand, barrel-vaulted room, its vast space reverberating with the cries of kids rocketing out of their strollers or their parents' embrace to zigzag across the tiled floor like so many free-range chickens. Then I started to make my way through the three floors of exhibits. A wealth of information is offered at Ellis, through many different media: photographs, films, objects in cases, displays of documents, recordings, and lots of reading matter. At one point, a subtly secluded installation of photographs enables parents to avoid exposing their small children to images of what a human being looks like after he or she has had the misfortune to be in the direct path of a pogrom. (Pogroms were among the leading causes of mass immigration from Russia before 1918.) "Sometimes, new arrivals had to wait aboard ship for days before being ferried to Ellis Island. They were often confined to the overcrowded ferries for hours without food or water, waiting their turn to disembark for inspection. The ferries, chartered by the steamship lines, lacked adequate toilets and lifesaving equipment," one photograph caption says, and those Ellis Island visitors who have just spent three hours on their feet can appreciate how much courage and hope those new arrivals must have had. The photograph shows a group of young women and little girls crammed together at a ferry window. Most of the women are haggard with exhaustion and furrowed with anxiety. One little girl in the very center, however, lifts up her face to the camera and is just on the point of breaking into a smile, her inner life on her lips.



"Soybean futures edged higher today."

I stayed around until the last ferry back, at five-fifteen. During that ride, I again stood on the top deck, and next to me a middle-aged couple were discussing their trip. "One weekend in New York," he said, a bit mournfully, "and it took all day to get here." She said, "Look on the good side. You'll have something to write in your journal." I've never had the discipline to keep a journal, but I have been thinking about what I would write of this visit if I did. I would start by noting a peculiarity: that I had had a pretty good time at a place that venerates families and generational connections, and had done so precisely because I was alone. I would surely mention the calypso singer and add some version of the idea articulated by Tchaikovsky—whose own trip to America is being celebrated this season—that music reconciles you to the condition of being alive. And I would end with a few sentences from my father, to whom I described my Ellis Island experience over the phone that evening. His parents had passed through Ellis Island on their way from Vitebsk, around 1900, and he remembered that his mother used to tell him about one of her elderly uncles, who was sent back to Russia because of an eye disease, and had had a big "E" chalked on his threadbare coat. I asked what impression that had left on her. He paused and thought for a moment. "Nothing," he said. "She wasn't old enough to understand." Then my father—a man who still works full time at the age of seventy-nine, who grew up in a family of four children, who spent his youth and adulthood learning how to get along with people of every stripe in school, in the Army, in a family business, and in a forty-four-year marriage; my father, whom I thought I knew inside and out—added matter-of-factly, "Look, the lesson of Ellis Island is simply put: you're born alone, you live alone, and you die alone."

Harry Spilman

WE have in our office a Harry Spilman baseball card from 1984. It makes Mr. Spilman look like the young Charlton Heston, and says that he is six feet one and a hundred and eighty-five pounds, and that he signed with the Reds in 1974 and was traded to the Astros in 1981. It also has a little news flash, which says, "**Dateline** Apr 19, 1983: His dramatic 3-run pinch-homer with 2 outs in 9th inning gave Astros 6-5 decision." If you don't recognize Mr. Spilman's name, we can tell you that he is the man who for six months of the year—the off-season—catches when Nolan Ryan pitches. If you don't know who Nolan Ryan is—if you don't know that he is forty-four years old and recently pitched his seventh no-hitter—we quit. After that game, Ryan, who is a gentleman, gave Mr. Spilman public credit for helping him keep in shape, and he could not have made it clearer that keeping in shape is what life is about for him now. That brought Mr. Spilman into the limelight, in a way, so we decided to try to talk to him.

We got Mr. Spilman's number by calling information in Alvin, Texas, which is his home town—and, of course, Nolan Ryan's. They have been next-door neighbors since 1988. We got Mr. Spilman on the phone with no trouble, and he has just the voice you'd expect—a slow, deep drawl. One of the questions we asked him was what Alvin, Texas, looks like.

"What does it look like? It looks like Texas. A lotta pastures full of green grass," he said.

"Is this a good time to talk?" we asked.

"Yeah. I just came in with my kids."

"What are their names?"

"Kelly and Ryan."

We said we could guess where the Ryan came from.

"Yeah, you could probably guess," Mr. Spilman said.

"How old are you, if you want to tell?"

"Thirty-six."

"Do you think that's old?"

"No."

"Do you think Nolan Ryan's old?"

"No. I call him Ole—'O-l-e,' Ole—Nolan."

"What kind of mood are you in when you play with Nolan?"

"What kind of mood am I in? I'm always in a good mood when I'm playing ball. That's all I've ever done. I've played for seventeen years."

"What kind of glove do you use when you play with Nolan?"

"A Rawlings catcher's mitt."

"And where do you play?"

"Where do we play catch?"

"Yes."

"In Nolan's back yard or out in the pasture. He has a pitcher's mound out there."

"Do you ever think it's depressing to be best friends with someone in your own profession who's so famous? And then people call you up, and so forth?"

"Is it depressing? No. It *surprises* me that you call me."

"Why?"

"I don't know. I guess it's hard to believe—for some people to believe—about me and him playing catch out in his back yard. But it's true."

"Do lots of people ask you about this?"

"Yeah. They ask me if it's *true*. I think people must think Nolan's out in some big-league ballpark working out, instead of in his back yard or in a pasture."

"What does his back yard look like?"

"A typical-lookin' back yard."

We said we were trying to picture him and Nolan Ryan out there in Nolan Ryan's back yard.

"Have you ever seen two kids out in the back yard playing catch?" Mr. Spilman asked. "It's like that. We have a good time."

"Why do you think you became friends?" we asked.

"Why? I don't know. Probably because we got a lot in common. We both play baseball. We both like the outdoor life. Horses, cattle, what have you. We're both from small towns. The way we were raised, we might appreciate things a little bit more. I learned that from my mom and dad."

"What did they teach you?"

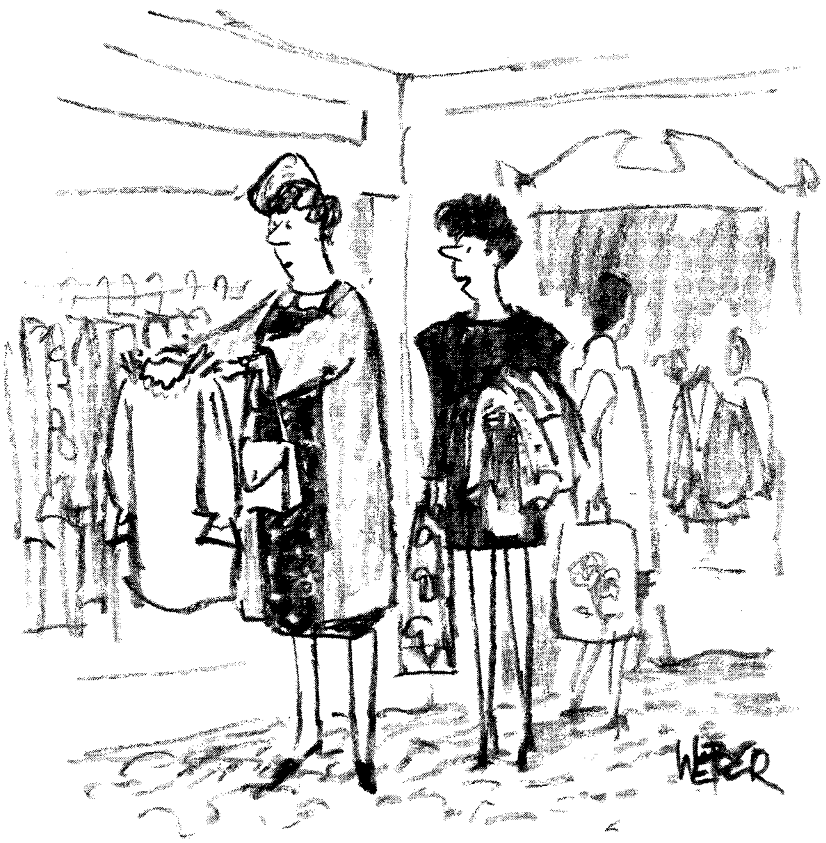
"My dad taught me what hard work is."

"And your mother?"

"Plenty of manners. I guess I turned out pretty good."

We asked Mr. Spilman to describe himself, and that is when he suggested that we get one of his baseball cards. "You can buy one of those bubble-gum cards there in New York," he said. "You go to a baseball-card shop."

It was true. We put down the telephone, walked one block to a baseball-card shop, and asked the man there for a Harry Spilman. The man handed us a huge pile of cards, and there he was: Harry Spilman, the third card from the top.



"T-shirt weather's coming. How ready are you?"

CRAZY FOR LOVING YOU

NOTES FROM WEEK ONE OF THE PSYCHIATRISTS' STRIKE

MONDAY: Came in today needing to talk. I was very antsy. I had that pressured speech you hear from schizophrenics. Not that I'm schizy. Sure, I'm on medication. I'm a pharmacological construct like everyone else. But it's nothing heavy—an anti-depressant, a little lithium, sometimes a tad of something from the benzodiazepine family to take the edge off. So who do I find filling in for Stanley because of the strike? Enid, the agoraphobe. Only now she doesn't mind leaving home like this because not only the shrinks but the doormen and the elevator operators are on strike. Enid is also afraid of elevators and doormen.

I lie down on the couch and I tell her my dream. It has to do with this enormous tree, something like a redwood, and a guy in a dark hat with a beard, kind of Chassidic-looking, carrying an axe. I didn't actually have this dream, but I want to test her on something easy before I give her real material. She does pretty well. She knows that Stanley is Jewish, as was Freud, and she quickly pegs the guy with the axe as a mohel, which of course explains the tree.

What really surprises me is that she actually seems concerned about me—not something I ever noticed in Stanley. This, after all, is a woman who understands fear. Castration, wide-open spaces, elevators—what's the difference? We are discussing ways to bolster our courage—real support-group stuff, not the sort of thing Stanley charges a hundred and seventy-five dollars an hour for—when my time runs out. I suggest she skip her next patient so we can have a cup of coffee together. She agrees. Since she is not in fact a shrink, we figure there is no ethical conflict.

TUESDAY: Jack, the depressive, is Shrink-for-a-Day. Jack is the patient Enid cancelled yesterday. He is wearing a dark three-piece suit and pointy-toed wing tips. He has a pad in his lap, and he is grinding his teeth while he sharpens a pencil with a small custom-made penknife.

Immediately I start to have associations that I am not willing to disclose to a layman. I have only met Jack once, when all Stanley's patients got together to figure out a schedule during the strike, and I'm sure you can imagine the things I'm thinking. A depressed guy, with a pathetic stub of a pencil, whittling it down even smaller? With analysts like this, who needs dreams?

I must say, however, that Jack does the silence very well. In my experience this is one of the tough moves for shrinks. Stanley was all right at the silence, he could hold on for quite a long time, but you could hear him breathing and shifting around and fidgeting. That always reassured me. I can't hear a thing from Jack. It comes to me with some force that I am lying down, in a very vulnerable position, and that behind me, where I can't see him, is a mental patient with a knife. Am I crazy?

Finally Jack breaks the silence.

"What's the thought, Ted?" Boy, you can tell one of Stanley's protégés a mile away. What's the thought, indeed.

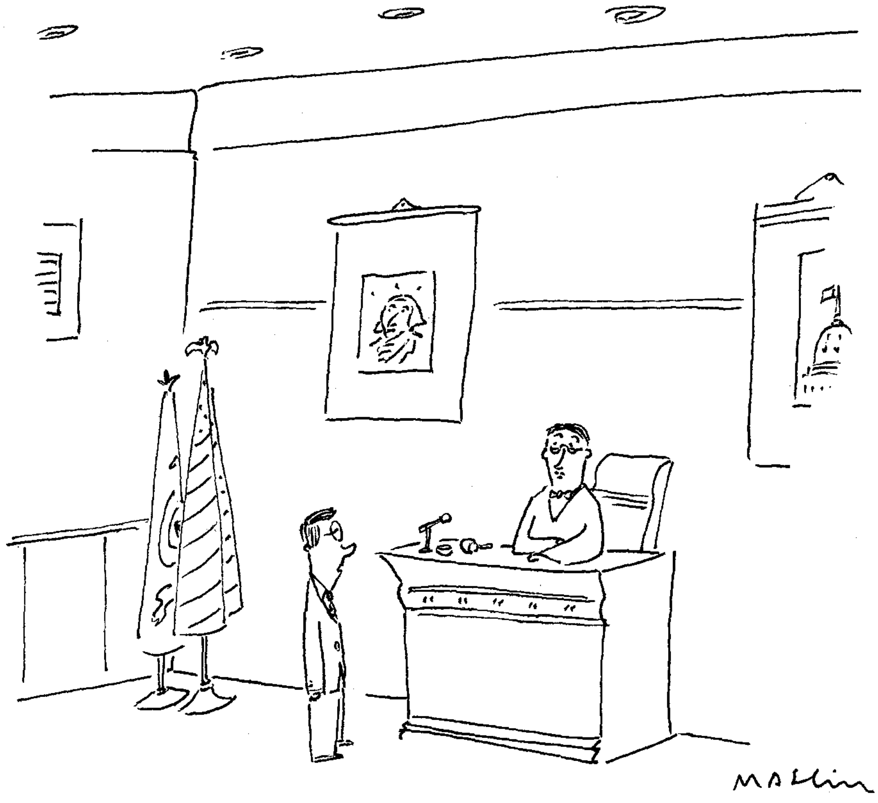
"I was just wondering what you do, Jack—you know, regularly?"

"I'm a doorman."

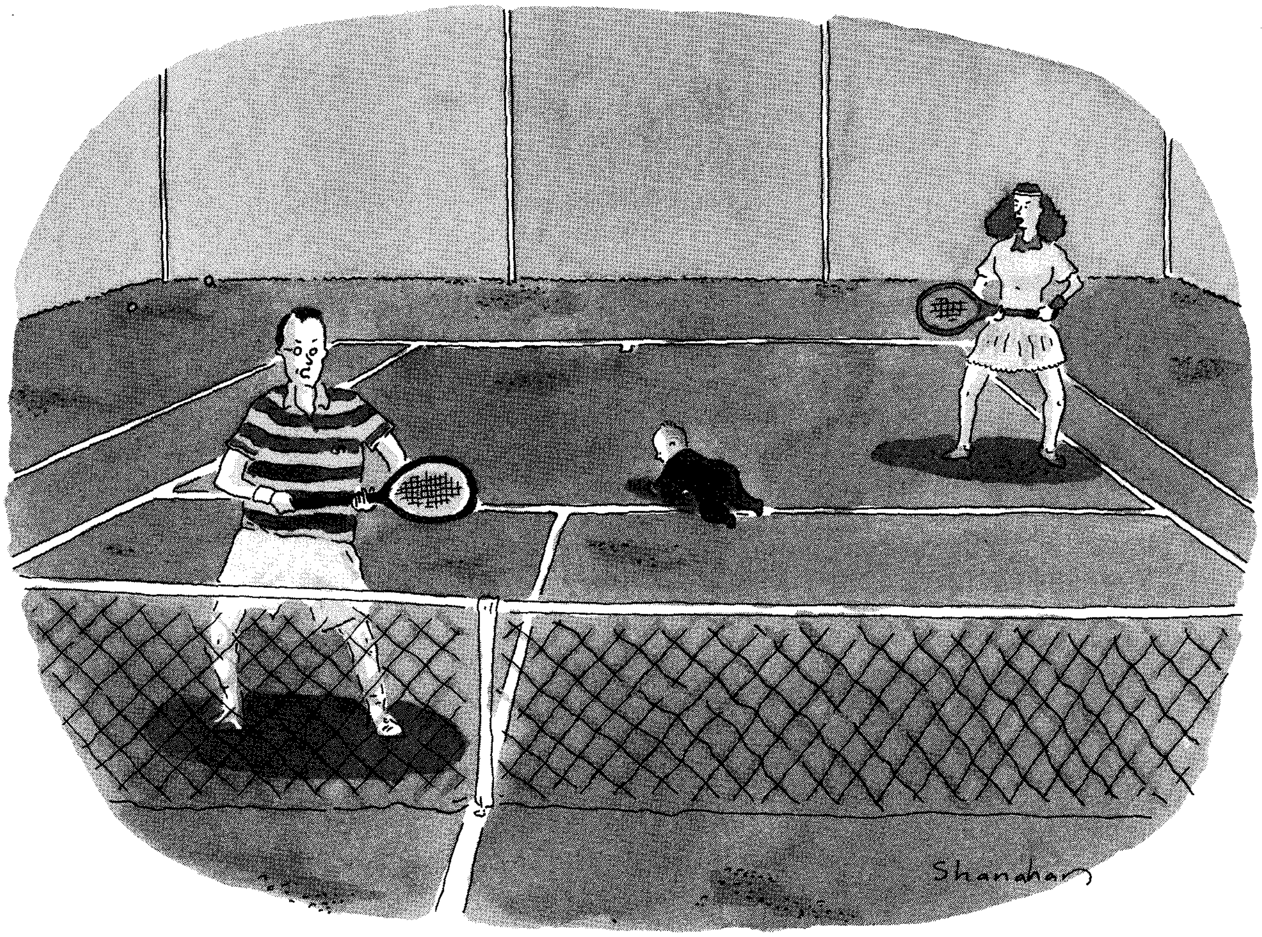
"Oh."

WEDNESDAY: My day. Jack turns out to be not such a bad guy after all—some fairly sticky psychosexual conflicts, and not a lot of ego strength, but not a bad sort. The standard approach with a patient like this is to support the defenses, not to probe too far too fast. I notice that Jack is still sharpening the pencil—it's down to paper-clip size, just about—but I don't challenge him on it. We talk about superficial issues mostly—how the doormen's strike threatens his sense of self, and how betrayed he feels that just when he needs Stanley most Stanley has abandoned him. I point out that Stanley may feel the same way about his doorman.

None of the other patients are much of a challenge either: Ellen is a copy editor at an electrical-engineering journal. Her presenting problem is difficulty concentrating on her work. My diagnosis: absence of castration anxiety. Thomas is on the rebound from a therapist who freed his inner child, thus causing him to move all his capital from biotechnology to toys, just before the Gulf War. Now he hopes to make a killing on his Schwarzkopf action figure. Obviously Oedipal. Gary,



"If a weakness for anything caramel-coated is a crime, I guess I'm guilty."



"Yours!"   *"Yours!"*

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who has questions about his sexual identity, clearly suffers from a full-blown narcissistic personality disorder. He takes all strikes personally. Striking screenwriters are depriving him of movies. When the sanitation men went out it was because they hated his garbage. Gary has been through quite a number of psychiatrists and is convinced that his dreams alone have caused them to walk. With Enid, I decide to attack her agoraphobia with something unconventional: I take her to an Imax film about the Grand Canyon. Breakthrough! Afterward we go to her apartment for tea and Tylenol.

It is Florence who causes me the most difficulty. She enters the office slowly, looking straight at me with a smoky gaze. My first impression is of a young woman in black net stockings, with psychosexual conflicts. I cannot help noticing her full red lips (wet look) and firm and shapely breasts. Indeed, Florence is in therapy because she acts out sexually and has poor impulse control. Countertransference sets in immediately. I know, of course, that, if I, as her analyst, fall prey to her charms, as so many other men have, rather than remaining concerned and helpful at a distance, I will be doing her no good. On the other hand, I'm not actually her analyst.

Thursday: Off day. I meet Enid at her place. She says she is not coming out anymore, ever again. Apparently she has found out about me and Florence, whom she refers to as a decompensating tramp. I point out that (a) although Florence may have some sexual issues to work through, she is not a tramp; (b) as a friend of mine, and nothing more than that yet, Enid has no business diagnosing my other acquaintances; (c) as a sometime analyst of mine she has no business making value judgments and directive comments about my sex life; (d) as my patient it's none of her business.

Friday: Florence's day. Enid stays home. Jack, encountered at the end of his hour, looks happier than usual. For me countertransference and transference have become inextricably entangled. I ask Florence if the same sort of thing goes on with all her patients.

"What's the thought?" she says.

I am beginning to suffer from confusion. Wednesday I was a shrink. Last night I was a doorman. Tomorrow I'm a porter. People I hardly know ask me if I live in my own building. Every day I have a different analyst. They all seem to think I suffer from hidden sexual conflicts.

On my way out, I see Stanley in the elevator, operating it. The encounter is awkward for both of us. I thank him for letting us continue to use his office during the strike, and I compliment him on how close the elevator and the lobby floor line up when he stops. I can see him formulating a question, some probe, some pipe-munching aperçu, and then stopping himself, abruptly, as if this would violate the passenger-operator relationship. It's a sad moment.

"Watch your step," he says.

"Thanks," I say. "See you next week."

—James Gorman

ART WORK

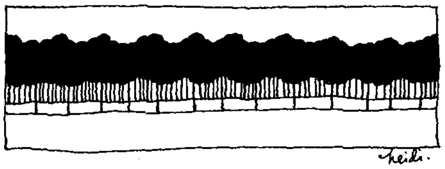
IN 1947 Matisse painted "Le Silence Habité des Maisons." It is reproduced in Sir Lawrence Gowing's "Matisse," only very small, and in black and white. Two people sit at the corner of a table. The mother, it may be, has a reflective chin propped on a hand propped on the table. The child, it may be, turns the page of a huge white book, whose arch of paper makes an integral curve with his/her lower arm. In front, a vase of flowers. Behind, six huge panes of window; behind them, a mass of trees and perhaps sunlight. The people's faces are perfect blank ovals, featureless. Above them, to the left, is a chalked outline, done as it might be by a child, of a round on a stalk, above bricks. It is a pity not to have the colors here, but it is possible, tempting, to imagine them, sumptuous as they were in what Gowing says was "the reconciliation that is only within the reach of great painters in old age." The late pictures, Gowing says, have extraordinary virility: "At last Matisse is wholly at ease with the fierce impulse." It is a dark little image on the page: charcoal gray, slate gray, soft pale pencil-gray—subdued, demure. We may imagine it flaming, in carmine or vermillion, or swaying in indigo darkness, or perhaps—beyond the window—gold and green. We may imagine it. The darkness of the child may be black on black, or black on blue, or blue on some sort of red. The book is white. Who is the watching totem under the ceiling?

THERE is an inhabited silence inside 49 Tadema Road, in South London, in the sense that there are no voices, though there are various sounds, some of them even pervasive and raucous sounds, which an unconcerned ear might construe as the background din of a sort of silence. There is the churning hum of the washing machine—a kind of splashy mechanical giggle with a grinding note in it—tossing its wet mass one way, resting and simmering, tossing it the other. A real habitué of this noise will tense him- or herself against the coming banshee scream of the spin cycle, which will be accompanied by a drumming tattoo of machine feet scrabbling on the tiles.

The dryer is chuntering, too. It is not a new dryer; its carbon brushes are worn, it thumps and creaks and screeches in its slow circling. The mass of cloth inside it flails, flops with a crash, rises, flails, flops with a crash. An attentive ear could hear the difference in the texture and mass of the flop as the sleeves and stockings are bound into sausages and balls by the fine straps of petticoats and bras.

In the front room, chanting to itself—for no one is watching it—the television is full on at midday. Not loudly; there are rules about noise. The noise it is making is the willfully upbeat, cheery squitter of female presenters on children's TV: accented with regular, repetitive amazement, mixed in with the grunts and cackles and high-pitched squeaks of a flock of furry puppets, a cross-eyed magenta haystack with a snout, a kingfisher-blue gerbil with a whirling tail, a torpid emerald-green coiled serpent with a poppy-red dangling tongue and movable fringed eyelids. At regular intervals, between the bouts of presenter squitter and puppet snorts and squawks, come (analogous to the spin cycle) the musical outbursts—a drumroll, a squeal on a woodwind, a percussion battery, a ta-ta-ta-TA—that punctuate a roseate full-frame shot with a lime-colored logo: T-NE-TV.

On the first floor, behind a closed door, the circular rush and swish of Jamie's electric trains can be heard. Nothing can be heard of Natasha's record-player, behind her door, and Natasha cannot hear the outside world, for her whole earphoned head is stuffed with beating vibrations and exploding howls and ululations. She lies on her bed and twitches in rhythm. Anyone coming in could well hear, from the other side of the corridor, the twangling tinny bumps made by the baffled sound trying to break out of its boxer-glove packaging. Natasha's face has the empty beatific intelligence of some of Matisse's supine women. Her face is white and oval and luminous with youth. Her hair is inky blue-black, and fanned across her not too clean pillows. Her bedspread is jazzy black forms of ferns or seaweeds on a scarlet ground, forms that the textile designer would never have seen without Matisse. Her arms and legs dangle beyond the confines of the ruffled rectangle of this spread, too gawky to be an odalisque's, but just as delicious in their curves. White, limp, relaxed, twitching. Twitches can't be painted.



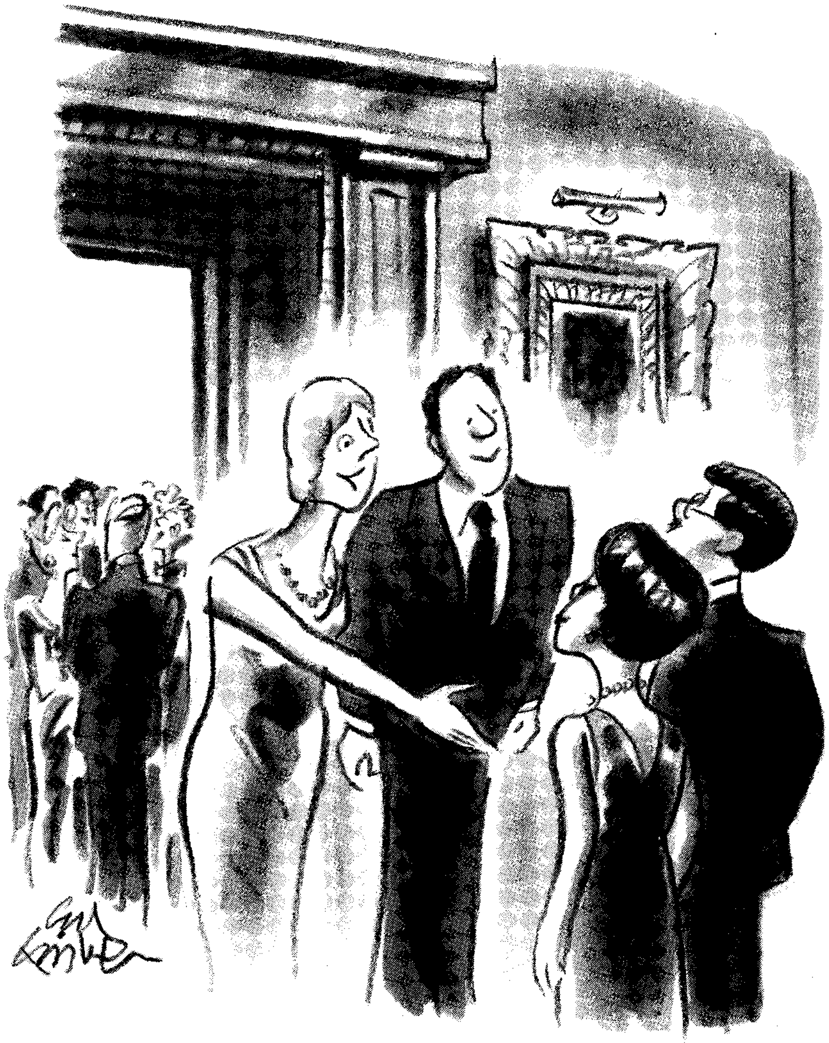
From Debbie's room comes the sound of the typewriter. It is an old mechanical typewriter; its noises are metallic and clicking. It chitters on to the end of a line, then there is the musical, or almost musical, *cling* of the little bell and the clash of the return. Tap tap tap tap tappety tappety tappety cling clash tappety tap tap. A silence. Debbie sits over her typewriter with her oval chin in her long hands and her black hair coiled gracefully at her neck. It is easy to see where Natasha's ink-and-ivory beauty comes from. Debbie frowns. She taps a tooth (ivory lacquer, a shade darker than the skin) with an oval nail, rose madder. Debbie's office, or study, is very cramped. There is a drawing board, but if it is not in use it is blocked up against the window, obscuring much of the light and all of the scarlet geraniums and cobalt-blue lobelias in a window box on the sill. Debbie can work at her desk or work at her drawing board, but not both at once, though she would like to be able to; she is the design editor of *A Woman's Place*, of which the (perhaps obscure) premise is that a woman's place is not only, perhaps not even primarily, in the home. Debbie is working at home at the moment because Jamie has chicken pox and the doctor is coming, and the doctor cannot say at what time he will or won't call, as there is too much pressure. Jamie has the same inky hair as his mother and sister, and has even longer, blacker lashes over black eyes. He has the same skin, too, but at the moment it is a wonderfully humped and varied terrain of rosy peaks and hummocks, most the pink of those boring little begonias with fleshy leaves, but some raging into salmon deeps and some like extinct volcanoes with umber and ochre crusts. It was Jamie who was watching the TV, but he cannot stick at anything, he itches too wildly, he tears at his flesh with his bitten-down nails, he rubs himself against chairs. Debbie stood him on a coffee table and swabbed and painted him with calamine lotion, creating a kind of streaked sugar or plaster-of-Paris mannikin with powdery, pinky-beige crude surfaces, rough makeup, failed paint, a dull bland color under which the bumpy buds of the pox heated themselves into reëmergence. "War paint," Debbie said to her son, squeezing and stippling the liquid on his round little belly, between his poor hot legs. "You could put stripes of cocoa on," said Jamie. "And icing sugar. That would make three colors of stripes." Debbie would have liked to paint him all over, with fern-green cake dye and crimson cochineal, if that would have distracted or assuaged him, but she had to finish the piece she was writing, which was about the new wave of kitchen-plastic design—wacky colors, staggering new streamlined shapes.

On Debbie's walls, which are lemon-colored, are photographs of Natasha and Jamie as naked babies and, later, as gap-toothed, grinning school heads-and-shoulders; a series of very small woodcuts illustrating fairy tales—a mermaid, an old witch with a spindle, a bear, and two roses; and, in a quite different style, a small painting of a table, a hyperrealist wooden table with a blue vase and a small Rubik's Cube on it. Also, in white frames, two paintings done by a younger Natasha: a vase of anemones, watery crimsons and purples; a dress flung over a chair, blue dress, gray chair, promising folds, in a probably unintentional void.

Debbie types, and cocks her head for the sound of the doorbell. She types "peculiarly luscious new purple, like bilberry juice with a little cream swirled in it." She jumps at the sound not of the doorbell but of her telephone, one of the new fluttering burrs, disconcertingly high-pitched. It is her editor, asking when she will be able to make a layout conference. She speaks, placating, explaining, just sketching in an appeal for sympathy. The editor of *A Woman's Place* is a man, who reads and slightly despises the pieces about the guilt of the working mother which his periodical periodically puts out. Debbie changes tack, and makes him laugh with a description of where poor Jamie's spots have managed to sprout. "Poor little bugger," quacks the editor into Debbie's ear, inaudible to the rest of the house.

Up and down the stairs, joining all three floors, surges a roaring and wheezing noise, a rhythmic and complex and swelling crescendo, snorting, sucking, with a high-pitched drone planing over a kind of grinding sound, interrupted every now and then by a frenetic rattle, accompanied by a new, menacing whine. Behind the Hoover, upward and downward, comes Mrs. Brown, without whom, it must immediately be said, Debbie's world would not hold together.

Mrs. Brown came ten years ago, in answer to an advertisement in the local paper. Natasha was four, and Jamie was on the way. Debbie was unwell, and at her wits' end with fear of losing her job. She put "artistic family" in the advertisement, expecting perhaps to evoke some tolerance, if not positive affection, for the tattered wallpaper and burgeoning mess. She didn't have much response: a couple of art students, one an unmarried mum who wanted to share babysitting, painting time, and chores; a very old, purblind, tortoise-paced ex-parlormaid; and Mrs. Brown. Mrs. Brown had a skin that was neither black nor brown but a kind of amber yellow, the sort of yellow that bruises turn before they vanish, but all over. She had a lot of wiry soot-colored hair, which rose, like the crown of a playing-card king, out of a bandeau of flowery material tied tightly about her brow, like the headband of a tennis star or the lace cap of an old-fashioned maid. Mrs. Brown's clothes were, and are, flowery and surprising—jumble-sale remnants, rejects and ends of lines, rainbow-colored pullovers made from the Ping-Pong-ball-size unwanted residues of other people's knitting. She came for her interview in a not too clean (but not too dirty) film-star's trenchcoat, which she didn't take off until Debbie said, dry-mouthed with anxiety, "I think you and I might



"I'm so glad to meet someone Japanese. I loved 'The Tale of Genji'!"

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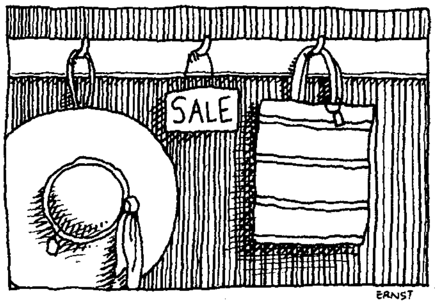
manage to get on, don't *you?*" And Mrs. Brown nodded decisively, accepted a cup of coffee, and divested herself of the trenchcoat, revealing pantaloons made of some kind of thick cream-colored upholstery linen wonderfully traversed by crimson open-mouthed Indian flowers and birds of paradise and tendrils of unearthly creepers, and a royal-blue sweater embroidered all over with woollen daisies, white marguerites, orange black-eyed Susans.

Mrs. Brown does not smile very much. Her face has some resemblance to a primitive mask: cheeks in triangular planes; long, straight, salient nose; a mouth usually tightly closed. Her expression can be read as prim, or grim, or watchful, or perhaps—though this is not the first idea that comes to mind—perhaps resigned. She likes to go barefoot in the house, it turns out; she is not used to this level of heating, she explains, implying—or does Debbie misread her?—that the heating is an unhealthy extravagance. She comes up behind you with no warning, and at first this used to irritate Debbie most frightfully, but now she is used to it. She is used to Mrs. Brown; her most powerful emotion in relation to Mrs. Brown is terror that she will leave. If Mrs. Brown is not Debbie's friend, she is the closest person to Debbie on earth, excluding perhaps the immediate family. Debbie and Mrs. Brown *do not* share the usual intimacies, they have no common chatter about other people, but they have a kind of rock-bottom knowledge of each other's fears and pains—or so Debbie thinks, aware, nevertheless, that Mrs. Brown knows more about her than she will ever know about Mrs. Brown, since it is in Debbie's house that the relationship is carried out. Mrs. Brown washes Debbie's underwear and tidies Debbie's desk, putting Debbie's letters—private and official, threatening and secret—in tidy heaps. Mrs. Brown counts the bottles and sweeps up the broken glass after parties, though she does not partake of the festive food. Mrs. Brown changes Debbie's sheets.

At that decisive interview, Debbie did not ask Mrs. Brown whether Mrs. Brown had children (though she was *dying to*), because she, Debbie, so resents being asked, by those interviewing her for jobs, whether she has children, and what she would do with them. She did ask if Mrs. Brown had a telephone, and Mrs. Brown said yes, *she did, she found it essential; she used* the word "essential" tidily and dryly, just like that, without elaboration. "So you will tell me in advance, if at all possible," said Debbie, trying to sound sweet and commonly courteous, "if you can't come ever, if you aren't going to be able to come ever, because I have to make such complicated arrangements if people are going to let me down—that is, can't make it for any reason." "I think you'll find I'm reliable," said Mrs. Brown. "But it's no good me saying so, you'll have to see. You needn't worry though, bar the unforeseen." "Acts of God," *said* Debbie. "Well, and acts of Hooker, too," said Mrs. Brown, without saying *who Hooker might be.*



Debbie did find that Mrs. Brown was, as she had said, reliable. She also discovered, not immediately, that Mrs. Brown had two sons, Lawrence and Gareth, the latter name shortened to Gary by his friends but not by Mrs. Brown. These boys were already ten and eight when Mrs. Brown came to Debbie. Lawrence is now at Newcastle University—"The lodgings are cheaper up there," says Mrs. Brown. Gareth has left home without many qualifications, and works, Mrs. Brown says, "in distribution." He has made the wrong sort of friends, Mrs. Brown says, but she does not elaborate. Hooker is the father of Lawrence and Gareth. Debbie does not know, and does not ask, whether Hooker *is or is not* Mr. Brown. During the early childhood of Natasha and Jamie, Hooker would make sudden forays into Mrs. Brown's life and her council flat, from which he had departed before she took to

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ANATOLIAN JOURNEY

Impedimenta of the self
Left behind somewhere, or traded
For a bag with good straps, a book of Turkish proverbs,
Sandals of proven leather,
A bottle of water called, yes, "Life"
In the language of the country—pine trees
stencilled on the glass.

Last Thursday you were standing by a puddle
in Istanbul asking a question:
"Why am I not home, where I should be?"
Now you're east into Asia, hearing absently
alien conjugations,
Hoping this bus won't dizzy off this mountain.

"So you think you're a fish now?"
"It's true that time is a river."
From dreaming fingers your rings dumbly witness your travels.
One hand goes to your wallet, where sober dollars
stiffly face the gaudy local bills.
Your passport is there as well,
establishing your identity.

Nod, and in the morning wake to
Acres of sunflowers
warmer than any human welcome;
Haystacks domed like the domes of whitewashed mosques,
And the Black Sea rising out of itself
like the fragrance of remoteness.

—RICHARD TILLINGHAST

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going out to clean up after people like Debbie. One of Mrs. Brown's rare days off was for her court appearance to get an injunction to stop Hooker coming round. Hooker was the cause of Mrs. Brown's bruises—the chocolate-and-violet stains on the gold skin, the bloody cushions in the hair, and the wine-colored efflorescence on her lips. Once, and once only, at this time, Debbie found Mrs. Brown sitting on the bathroom stool, howling, and brought her cups of coffee, and held her hands, and sent her home in a taxi. It was Mrs. Brown who saw Debbie through the depression after Jamie's birth, with a mixture of carefully timed indulgences and requirements. "I've brought you a bowl of soup, you'll do no good in the world if you don't eat." "I've brought Baby up to you, Mrs. Dennison, he's crying his heart out with hunger, he needs his mother, that's what it is." They call each other Mrs. Dennison and Mrs. Brown. They rely on the kind of distance and breathing space this courtesy gives them. Mrs. Brown was scathing about her days in the hospital, when she had been concussed after one of Hooker's visits. "They call you 'love,' and 'dearie,' and 'pet.' I say, I need a bit of respect, my name is Mrs. Brown."

Victoria Roberts

"Suddenly, you've gone all kind around the eyes."

• •

DEBBIE types "New molding techniques give new streamlined shapes to the most banal objects. Sink trays and storage jars . . ." "Banal" is the wrong word, she thinks. "Everyday"? Wrong too. The Hoover snorts on the turning of the stair. The doorbell rings. A voice of pure male rage rings out from the top floor.

"Debbie? Debbie, are you there? Just come here a moment." Debbie is torn. Mrs. Brown abandons the Hoover, and all its slack, defunct-seeming tubes, along the bannisters.

"You attend to *him*, and I'll just let the doctor in and say you'll be down directly."

Debbie negotiates the Hoover and goes up the attic stairs.

"Look," says Debbie's husband, Robin. "Look what she has done. If you can't get it into her head that she mustn't muck about with my work things, she'll have to go."

Robin has the whole third floor, once three bedrooms and a tiny room with a sink and a lavatory, as his studio. He has had large pivoting windows set into the roof, with linen blinds in a natural cream and a terracotta. He can have almost whatever light he likes from whatever angle. Debbie feels her usual knot of emotions: fear that Robin will shout at Mrs. Brown, fear that Mrs. Brown will take offense, a mixture of rage and grim gratitude that it is always to her that he addresses his complaints.

"The doctor has come for Jamie, darling," Debbie says. "I must go, he won't have long."

"This bowl," says Robin Dennison, "this bowl, as anyone can see, is a work of art. Look at that glaze. Look at those huge satisfactory blue and orange fruits painted in it, look at the green leaves and the bits of yellow—just *look*, Debbie. Now, I ask you, would anyone suppose this bowl was a kind of *dustbin* for things they were too lazy to put away or carry off, would they, do you suppose? Anyone *with their wits about them*, would they?"

"What's the matter?" says Debbie neutrally, her ear turned to the stairs.

"*Look*," cries Robin. The bowl, both sumptuously decorated and dusty, contains a few random elastic bands, a chain of paper clips, an obscure plastic cog from some tiny clock, a battered but unused stamp, two oil pastels (blue and orange), a piece of dried bread, a very short length of electric wire, a dead chrysanthemum, three colored thumbtacks (red, blue, green), a single lapis cufflink, an electric bulb with a burned patch on its curve, a box of matches, a china keyhole cover, two India rubbers, a dead bluebottle, and two live ants running in circles, possibly busy, possibly frantically lost.

"Her habits are filthy," says Robin.

Debbie looks around the studio, which is not the habitation of a tidy man. Apart from the inevitable mess—splashed palettes, drying canvases, jars of water—there are other heaps and dumps. Magazines open and closed, wineglasses, beer glasses, bottles, constellations of crayons and pencils, unopened messages from the income-tax man, saucers of clips and pins.

"It is hard for anyone to tell what to leave alone up here, and what to clear up," she says.

"No, it isn't. Dirt is dirt, and personal *things*, things in use, are things in use. All it requires is intelligence."

"She seems to have found that cufflink you were going on about."

"I expect I found it myself and put it down somewhere safe, and she interfered with it."

All this is part of a ritual dialogue that Debbie can hardly bear to hear again, let alone to utter her own banal parts of, and yet she senses it is somehow necessary to their survival. She does not wholly know whether the reason it is necessary is that Robin needs to assert himself and win, or that if she does not stand between Robin and Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Brown will leave. She does not need to think about it anymore; she merely turns and hearkens to it like Donne's other compass-half, like a heliotrope.

"She could see I was painting *exactly* that bowl."

Indeed, there are sketches in charcoal, in colored chalks, of exactly that bowl, on an expanse of grained wood, propped up around the studio.

It crosses Debbie's mind that Mrs. Brown used exactly that bowl as a tidying receptacle for exactly that reason. Mrs. Brown has her own modes of silent aggression. Debbie does not raise this idea. Robin is neither moved by nor interested in Mrs. Brown's feelings.

"Shall I take them all and throw them away in the bin in my study, darling? And dust your bowl for you?"

"Wait a minute. Those are quite-all-right rubber bands. I was using that bread for rubbing out. The matches are O.K., nothing wrong with them. Some of us can't afford to throw good tools away, you know."

"Where shall I put them?"

"Just stick them on the table over there. I'll see to them myself. Do dust the bowl, please."

Debbie does as he asks, abstracting the cufflink, which she will return to his dressing table. She looks at her husband, who glares back at her, and then gives a smile like a rueful boy. He is a long, thin, insubstantial man in jeans and a fisherman's smock, with big joints, knuckles, wrists, and ankles, like an adolescent, which he is not. He has a very English face, long and fine and pink and white, like a worried colt. His soft hair is pushed up all round his head like a hedgehog and is more or less the same color as one. His eyes are an intense blue, like speedwell flowers. A photographer could choose between making him look like a gentle mystic and making him look like a dedicated cricketer. A painter could choose between a haziness at the edges, always light, never heavy, or very clear sketched-in features—bones, a brow, a chin, a clean-cut nose—in a kind of pale space.

"You *have* managed to make her understand about the fetishes."

"It took long enough," he grumbles. "I even gave her lectures on tones and complementary colors, I just *stood* there with the things and showed her."

"I should think that was interesting for her."

"She should know her job, without all that fuss. Anyway, it worked, I grant you that it worked."

"I must go, darling, the doctor's here. Do you want coffee when he's gone, shall I bring you a mug?"

"Yes, please. That will be nice."

He is not apologizing, but the ritual confrontation is over. Debbie kisses him. His cheek is soft. She says, "Have you heard from that girl at the Florimel Gallery yet?"

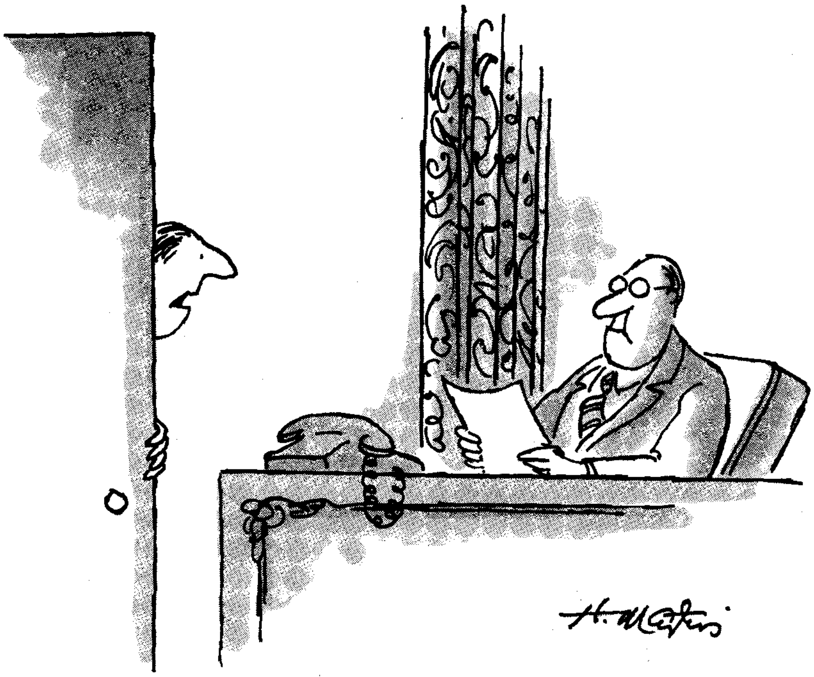
"I don't think she'll come. I don't think she ever meant to come."

"Yes, she did," says Debbie. "I talked to her, too. She really liked that blue-and-yellow-plate picture Toby has in his loo. She said she didn't think much of Toby's taste in general, but *that* was exquisite, she said; she said she just sat there staring at it, and caused an awful queue."

"She was probably drunk."

"Don't be *silly*, Robin. She'll turn up, I know. I don't say things I don't mean, do I?"

Debbie doesn't know whether the girl, Shona McRury, will turn up or not, but she says she will, with force, because it is better for her, as well as for Robin, if he is in a hopeful mood. Deborah loves Robin. She has loved him since they met at art school, where she studied graphic design and he studied fine art. She wanted to be a wood engraver and illustrate children's books. What she loved about Robin was the quality of his total dedication to his work, which had a certain austere separateness from everyone else's work. Those were the days of the sixties and the early seventies, when much painting was abstract—washes of color and no color, geometric patterns, games with the nature of canvas and pigment and the colors of light and their effect on the eye. Robin was a neorealist before the new neorealism. He painted what he saw—metal surfaces, wooden surfaces, plaster surfaces—with hallucinatory skill and accuracy. He painted expanses of neutral colors (wooden planks, glass tabletops, beige linen, crumbling plaster) and somewhere, somewhere unexpected—not quite in a corner, not quite in the center, not where the folds were pulling from or where the planks ran to—he painted something very small and very brilliant: a glass ball, a lustre vase, a bouquet of bone-china flowers (never anything alive), a heap of feathers. It was just this side of kitsch, then and now; it could have been turned into sweet prints and sold in folders in gift shops, then for its wit, now for its nostalgic emptiness containing verisimilitude. But Debbie saw that it was a serious attempt at a serious and terrible problem, an attempt to answer the question every artist must ask him- or herself, at some time: Why bother, why make representations of anything at all?



"The Reverend Mr. Gunderson is here for the annual blessing of the audit."

Seeing her first two of the series, a yellow hexagonal Chinese box on a gray blanket and a paperweight on a kitchen table, she said to him, "They are miraculous, they are like those times when time seems to stop, and you just *look* at something and *see* it, out of time, and you feel surprised that you can see at all, you are *so surprised*, and the seeing goes on and on, and gets better and better. . . ."

"Is that what you see in them?" he said.

"Oh, yes. Isn't that what you meant?"

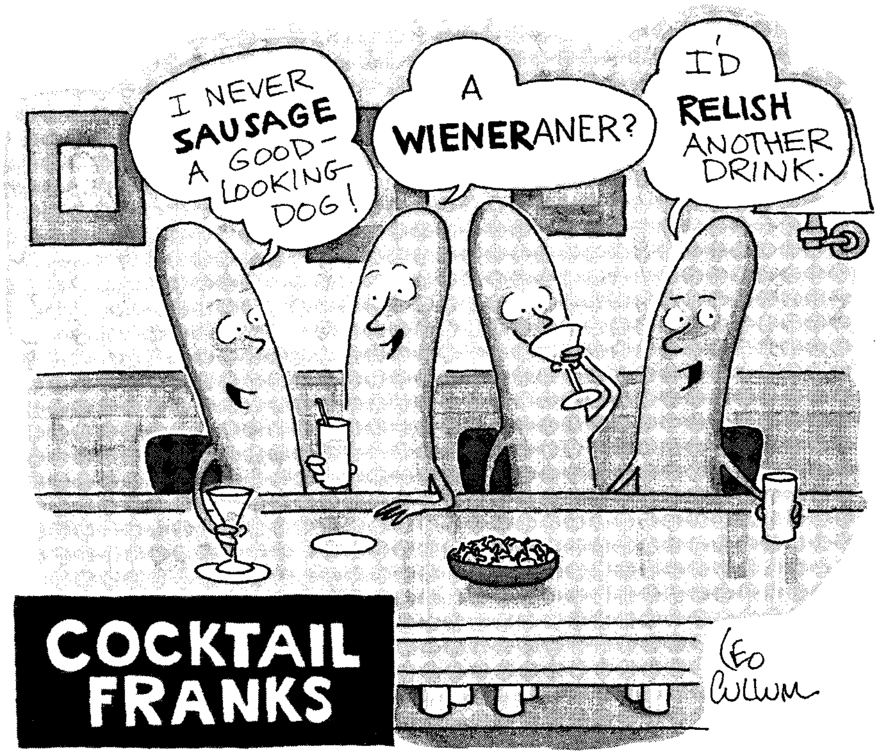
"It is exactly what I meant. But nobody's ever seen it. Or nobody's ever said it, anyway."

"I expect they do, really."

"Sometimes I think, it just looks . . . ordinary . . . to other people. Like *unprivileged* things, you know."

"How could it?" said Debbie.

SEX makes everything shine, even if it is not privileged, and Debbie made Robin happy and their happiness made his pictures seem stranger and brighter—perhaps even absolutely made them stranger and brighter. When they got married, Robin had a few hours of part-time teaching in a college, and Debbie, whose degree gave her more marketable skills, got a job doing layout in a corset-trade magazine, and then, after the children came, some free-lance work, then a subordinate job at *A Woman's Place*, and then promotion. She was good, she was well paid, she was the breadwinner. It seemed silly for Robin to go on teaching at all, his contribution was so meagre. Debbie's head was full of snazzy swimsuits and orange vats of carrot soup with emerald parsley sprinkled in it, of lipsticks from grape and plum to poppy and rose, of eye gloss and blusher and the ghosts of unmade woodcuts. Her fingers remembered the slow, careful work in the wood, with a quiet grief that didn't diminish but was manageable. She hated Robin because he never once mentioned the unmade woodcuts. It is possible to feel love and hate quite quietly, side by side, if one is a self-contained person. Debbie continued to love Robin while hating him because of the woodcuts, because of his absence of interest in how she managed the house, the children, the money, her profession, his needs and wants, and because of his resolute attempts to unsettle, humiliate, or drive away Mrs. Brown, without whom all Debbie's balancing acts would clatter and fall in wounding disarray.


I NEVER SAUSAGE A GOOD-LOOKING DOG!
A WIENERANER?
I'D RELISH ANOTHER DRINK.
COCKTAIL FRANKS
Leo Cullum

• •

LEFT to himself, Robin Dennison walks agitated up and down his studio. He is over forty. He thinks, I am over forty. He prevents himself, all the time now, from seeing his enterprise, his work, his life as absurd. He is not suited to the artistic life, in most ways. By upbringing and temperament, he should have been a solicitor or an accountant; he should have worn a suit and fished for trout and played cricket. He has no great self-confidence, no braggadocio, no real or absolute disposition to the sort of self-centered isolation he practices. He does it out of a stubborn faithfulness to a vision he had a long time ago now, a vision that has never expanded or diminished or taken its teeth out of him. He was given a set of gouache paints by an aunt when he was a boy, and he painted a geranium, and then a fish tank. He can still remember the illicit (it seemed to him) burst of sensuous delight with which he saw the wet carmine trail of his first flick of the brush, the slow circling of the wet hairs in a cobalt pool, the dashes of yellow-ochre and orange, as he conjured up, on matte white, wet and sinuous fish tails and fins. He was not much good at anything else, which muted any familial conflict over his choice of future. With his brushes in his hand he could *see*, he told himself through art school; without them, he was gray fog in a world of gray fog. He painted small bright things in large expanses of gray and buff and beige. Everyone said "He's *got* something" or, more dubiously, "He's got *something*." Probably not enough, they qualified this—silently to themselves, but Robin heard them well enough for all that.

He could talk to Debbie. Debbie knew about his vision of color; he had told her, and she had listened. He talked to her agitatedly at night about Matisse, about the paradoxical way in which the pure sensuousness of his "Luxe, Calme et Volupté" could be a religious experience of the nature of things. Not softness, he said to Debbie, *power*, calm power.

Debbie said yes, she understood, and they went to the South of France for a holiday, to be in the strong light *là-bas*. It was a disaster. He tried putting great washes of strong color on the canvas, à la Matisse, à la van Gogh, and it came out watery and feeble and absurd, there was nothing he could do. His only successful picture of that time was a kind of red beetle or bug and a large shining green-black scarab and a sulfurous butterfly on a sea of pebbles, gray and pinkish and sandy and buff and white and terra-cotta—you can imagine the kind of thing, it is everywhere in all countries, a variegated expanse of muted pebbles. Extending to all the four corners of the world of the canvas, a stony desert, with a dead leaf or two, and some random straws, and the baleful insects. He sold that one to a gallery and had hopes but heard no more, his career did not take off, and they never went back to the strong light; they take their holidays in the Cotswolds.

Robin has ritualized his life dangerously, but this is not, as he thinks, entirely because of his precarious vocation. His father, a borough surveyor, behaved in much the same way, particularly with regard to his distinction between his own, untouchable "things" and other people's, especially the cleaning lady's, "filth." Mr. Dennison—Mr. Rodney Dennison—used to shout at and about the "charwoman" if pipe dottle was thrown away, or soap fragments amalgamated, or scattered bills tidily gathered. He, like Robin with Mrs. Brown, used to feel a kind of panic of constriction, like the pain of sinus fluid swelling in the skull pockets, when threatened by tidy touches. He, like Robin, use to see Mrs. Briggs's progress like a snail trail across his private spaces. Robin puts it all down to Art. He does not ask himself if his hatred of Mrs. Brown is a deflected resentment of his helplessness in the capable hands of his wife, breadwinner, and life manager. He knows it is not so: Debbie is beautiful and clean, and represents order. Mrs. Brown is chaotic and wild to look at, and a secret smoker, and represents—even while dispersing or redistributing it—"filth."

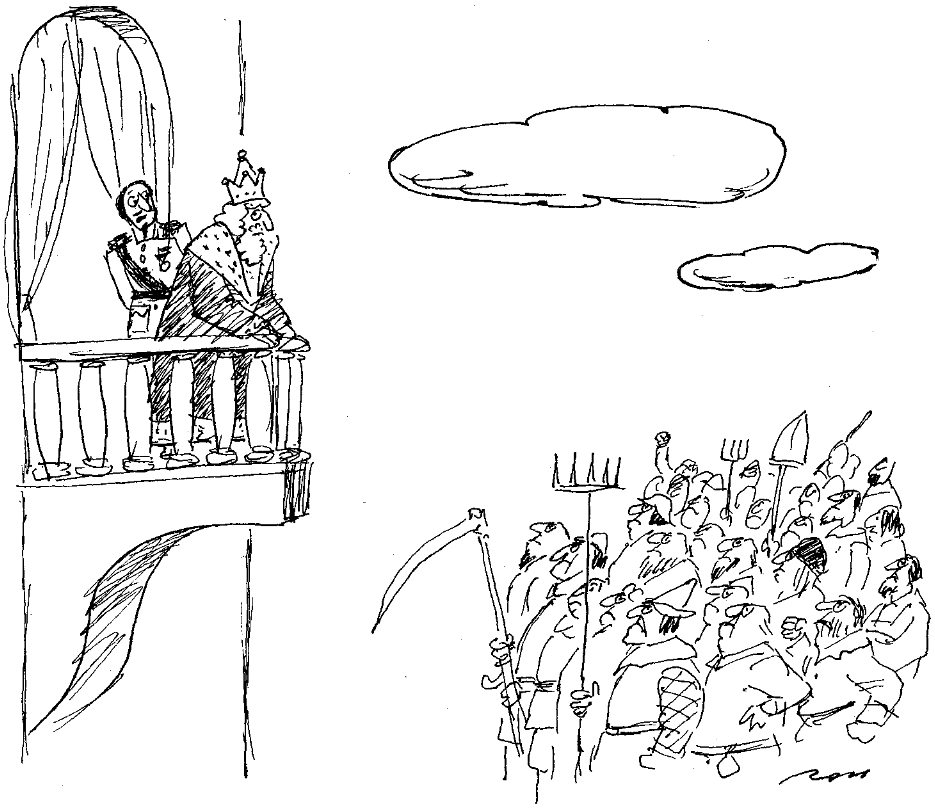
Mrs. Brown has always had an awkward habit of presuming to give the family gifts. She possesses a knitting machine, which Hooker got off the back of a lorry, and she is also good with knitting needles, crochet hooks, embroidery silks, and tapestry (not often, these last two—they are too expensive). She makes all her own clothes, out of whatever comes to hand—old plush curtains, Arab blankets, parachute silk, Robin's discarded trousers. She makes her things flamboyantly, with patches and fringes and braid and bizarre buttons. The epitome of tat, Robin considers, and he must consider, for she always strikes the eye, in a magenta-and-vermillion coverall over salmon-pink crêpe pantaloons, or in a lime-green shift with black lacy inserts. This would not be so bad if she didn't make, hadn't made for years, awful sweaters for Natasha and Jamie, awful rainbow sweaters in screaming hues, candy-striped sweaters, sweaters with bobble cherries bouncing on them, long peculiar rainbow scarves in fluffy angora, all sickly ice-cream colors. Robin tells Debbie these things must be sent back *at once*, his children can't be seen *dead* in them. The children are ambivalent, depending on age and circumstances. Jamie wore out one pullover with red engines and blue cows when he was six and would not be parted from it. Natasha, a year ago, had an unexpected success at a disco in a kind of Day-Glo fringed bolero (acid yellow, salmon pink, swimming-pool blue), but has rejected other offerings with her father's fastidious distaste. The real sufferer is Debbie, whose imagination is torn all ways. She knows from her own childhood exactly how it feels to wear clothes one doesn't like, isn't comfortable and invisible in, is embarrassed by. She also believes very strongly that there is more true kindness and courtesy in accepting gifts gratefully and enthusiastically than in offering them. And, more selfishly, she simply cannot do without Mrs. Brown, she needs Mrs. Brown; so her breakfast table is ornamented with patchwork tea cozies contributed by Mrs. Brown, her study chairs have circular cushions knitted in sugar-pink and orange by Mrs. Brown. Mrs. Brown stands in Debbie's study door sometimes and expounds her color theory.

"They always told us, didn't they, the teachers and grans, 'Orange and pink, they make you blink, blue and green should not be seen, mauve and red cannot be wed,' but I say, They're all there, the colors, God made 'em all and mixes 'em all in His creatures, what exists goes together somehow or other, don't you think, Mrs. Dennison?"

"Well, yes, but there are rules, too, you know, Mrs. Brown, how to get certain effects—there are *rules*, complementary colors and things. . . ."

"I'm learning all that. *He* tells me, when I move his things by accident, or whatever. Fascinating."

Mrs. Brown's yellow face is long, unsmiling, and judicious. She adds, "If Jamie's got no use for that nice sky-blue tank top I did for him, I'll



"They don't look too happy. Do your Harpo Marx imitation."

"Nassau was impossible, Barbados was touristy, and you know what Trinidad is like. It wasn't until we reached Brazil. . ."

have it back if you don't mind, I've got a use for a bit of sky blue."

"Oh, he *loves* it, Mrs. Brown! It's just a wee bit tight under the armpits, you understand. . . ."

"As I said, I've got a use for a bit of sky blue." Implacably. Debbie feels terrible. Mrs. Brown goes through Jamie's drawers and points out that there are holes in his red sweatshirt, that those rugger socks are shockingly shrunk, look at those tiddly feet. She puts them in a plastic dustbin bag. Debbie adds a cocktail dress she made a mistake about, mulberry shot-silk taffeta, and two of Robin's ties, presents from his Auntie Nem, which he will never wear, because they are a horrid mustard color with plummy flowers.

"*Interesting*," says Mrs. Brown, holding them up like captured eels, and adding them to her spoils. She is mollified, Debbie thinks; the mulberry dress has mollified her. She balks at knowing what Mrs. Brown will do with the mulberry dress.

Robin Dennison's "fetishes" have a table of their own, a white-painted wooden table, very simple. Once they were mantelpiece "things," but as they took on their status of fetishes they were given this stolidly unassuming English altar. What they have in common is a certain kind of glossy, very brightly colored solidity. They are the small icons of a cult of color. They began with the soldier, who cost five shillings and sixpence when Robin was little, and is made of painted wood, with red trousers and a blue jacket and a tall, bulbous black wooden bearskin. His red is a fading cherry crimson, his blue is a fading color between royal and ultramarine. He has a gold strap under his wooden chin and a pair of hectic pink circular spots on his wooden cheeks. Robin does not often paint him now—he cannot clear him of his double connotations of militarism and infantilism, and he loves him for neither of these but because the soldier was his first model for slivers of shine on rounded surfaces. Sometimes Robin paints just his shadow into little crowds of the other things.

Some of the other things are pure representations of single colors. Of these, two are glass—a cobalt-blue candlestick from the glassworks at Biot, and a round, heavy, grass-green, golden-green apple made for Wedgwood, greener and greener in its depths. The yellow thing was much the most expensive. It is not pure yellow, as the candlestick is blue and the apple is green; it is sunny yellow, butter yellow, buttercup-yellow china with a blue rim, a reproduction sauceboat from the tableware Monet designed for his house at Giverny. It cost fifty pounds, which Robin did not have but spent, he wanted *that* yellow so much. He did not really want the sauceboat, but any other piece he wanted cost money that even in his madness he saw he truly didn't have. In his fit of educating Mrs. Brown, Robin observes to her that the blue rim makes the yellow color sing out, because the colors are almost complementary. He would, however, still like to find a yellow thing without the blue. There is no orange thing, either. Robin often stands an orange and a lemon among the things, to make the colors complete, and Mrs. Brown's habit of moving these, or even throwing them away when they begin to soften and darken and grow patches of sage-green, blue-specked mold, is one of the things that make Robin see red and roar.

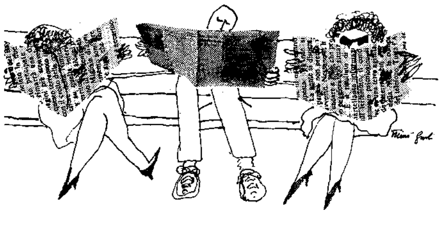
Purple is represented by a rather sweet handmade china sculpture of a round bowl of violets. These are both pale mauve and deep purple; they have a few, not many, green leaves in a wishy-washy apple color, and their container is a softly glazed black. Sometimes Robin omits the leaves, when he doesn't want that color. He knows the fetishes so well that he can allow for the effect of the leaves on the violets. Sometimes he wishes the leaves weren't there and sometimes he *makes* them fit into his color scheme, with delicate shifts of tones and accommodations in other places.

There was a problem with red for years and years. He had a banal red German plate, modern and utilitarian, a good strong red, that stood in but could not make itself sing out or be loved. When Robin found the present red thing, he felt very uneasy, because he knew immediately it was the, or a, *right thing,* and at the same time he didn't like it. He still doesn't. Like the poor soldier, but in more sinister ways, it has too much meaning. He found it in a Chinese bric-a-brac shop, in a dump bin with hundreds of others: it is a large, heart-shaped pincushion, plumply and gleamingly covered in a poppy-red silk that is *exactly* what he wants—at once soft and shining, delicate and glossy. It had a vulgar white lace frill, like a choirboy's collar, which Robin took off. Sometimes he puts into it some of his grandmother's old hatpins, imitation jewels, or lumps of jet. But he doesn't quite like this: it borders on the surrealist, and though he senses that that *might* be interesting, it also worries him. He did buy a box of multicolored glass-headed pins and he occasionally sets them into the cushion in a random scattering or, once, in a tight half-moon.

Besides the single-colored things, there are a few, a very few, multicolored things. A nineteen-fifties Venetian-glass tree, picked up in a second-hand shop, bearing little round fruits of many colors—emerald green, ruby, and dark sapphire, amethyst, and topaz. A pottery jug from Deruta with a huge triangular beaklike spout, covered with bright round-petalled childish flowers in all the colors, and a pair of chirpy primitive singing birds, in brown. A pot, also from Deruta, with a tawny-gold and blue-crested grotesque merman or human-headed dragon, bearded, and breathing a comma-shaped cloud of russet fire. There is a kite on the wall, a Korean kite in puce and yellow and blue and green and scarlet, and there are two large Chinese-silk pipe-cleaner birds, crested and flaunting long tails, one predominantly crimson with a yellow-and-aquamarine crest, one blue and green. The birds, too, the most fragile things, are a point of contention between Robin and Mrs. Brown. She says they collect dust. He says she bends their legs and squashes their down and interferes with the way they turn their necks to preen. She says they don't balance, the way he fixes them. Once she balanced one on the bough of the glass tree. There was a sulk that lasted weeks, and Mrs. Brown talked of leaving.

It was after Debbie patched up this difference that Robin explained to Mrs. Brown about red and green. He moved the apple back next to the pincushion, and redeployed the violets in front of the Monet sauceboat, beside the cobalt-blue candlestick, which was shaped a little like a gentian, a tall cup on a stem. Mrs. Brown's preference was for standing the fetishes in a rainbow line, from infrared to ultraviolet, so to speak.

Robin said, "Certain combinations have certain effects. For instance, the opposition of yellow and violet, blue and orange, that can appear *natural* in a way, because natural shadows are blue or violet. Light and shade, you see? Whereas red and green, if you put them next to each other, sometimes you can see a kind of dancing yellow line where they meet—and this isn't to do with light and shade, it's to do, possibly, with the fact that if you *add* certain reds to certain greens you can *make* yellow, which you would never have guessed."



"Geraniums are natural," said Mrs. Brown.

Robin stared at her distantly.

"Natural red and green. They don't make yellow."

"*Look,*" said Robin, pushing together the soft heart and the hard apple. He could see the dance of unreal yellow. He was entranced.

"Hmn," said Mrs. Brown.

"Can you see yellow?"

"Well, a sort of, how shall I say, a sort of wriggling, a sort of shimmering. I see what you mean."

"I try to make that happen, in the paintings."

"So I see. It's interesting, once

BASEMENT WALTZ

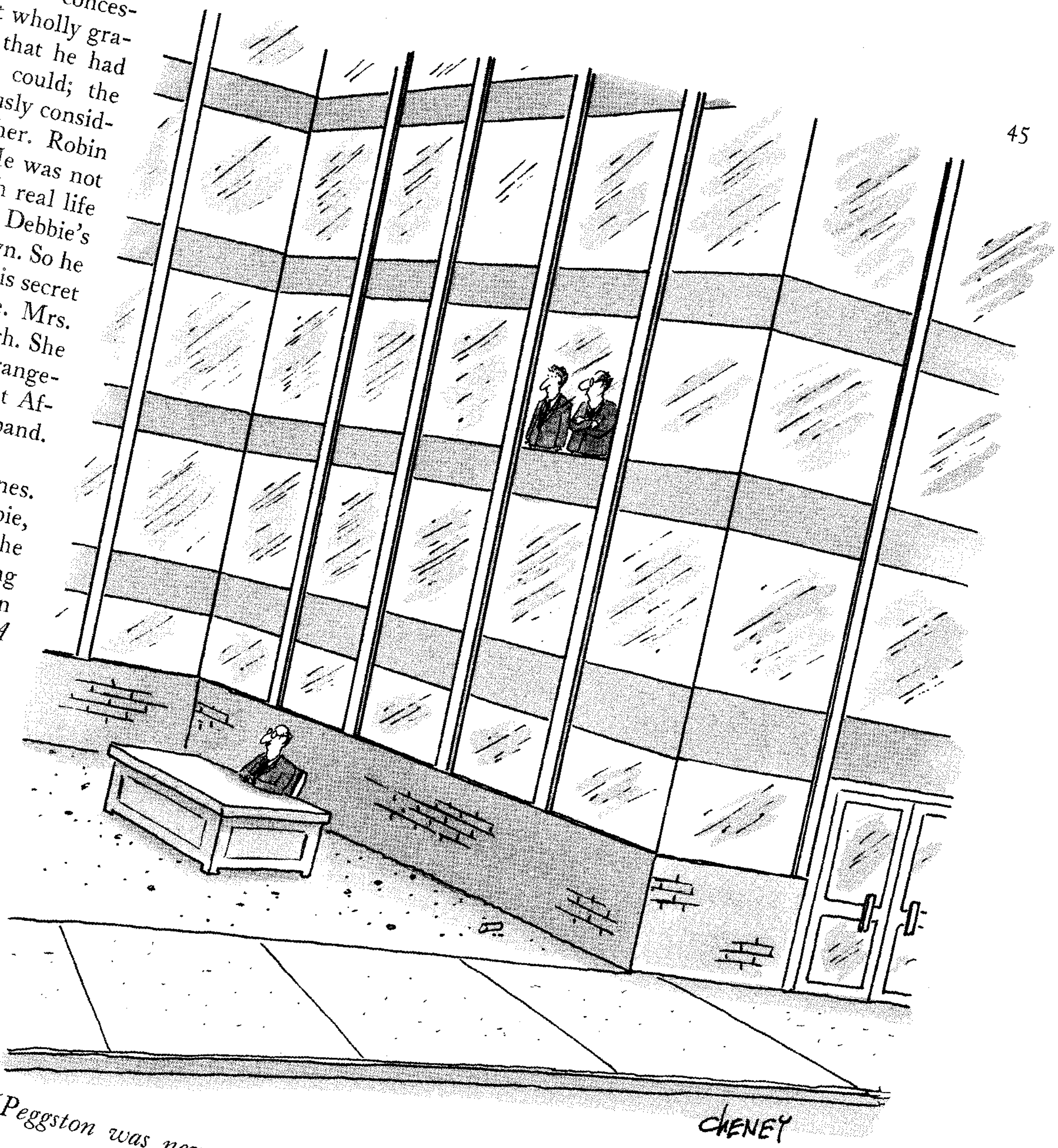
Probably the Platters, first music
to beckon inside, pushing my legs,
arms, confused spinal cord—who
knows what beat up and down, the tap
my foot took by itself working up
until all of me trembled the way
a man starving shoves his face
flush in the garbage reek? And she,
tulip slender, has time left her
now dumping the day's debris, cat
twining her sweet ankles? Where howls
that starflare of her
eyes, lost in what yard-shawl of pine?
I want it to lift and walk me back
across a black basement room, the slash
light lays down the stairs like a path
we can't seem to hold. I see rooms
we have been crushed in, breath and sweat,
buckled floorboards heaving, the dance
getting faster as we fly apart—as if we
must stomp some lower darkness off
before it climbs around us. Where,
just when I closed to kiss her,
went the word their song dies on, one
I want her to hear for no reason,
blinking helplessly above her day's
garbage? Like an evening bat
it dips, knows, goes, slick in air. It
feels like a mother's cheek, stillness
after you learned to dance, after you
kissed her in the silk box. Not dead,
it could beat yet in a basement where
everything waits, starts to sway. Looks up.

—Dave Smith

• •

"I know what you're up to."

The sentence was a concession, unsmiling, not wholly gracious. She accepted that he had given her what he could; the battle was, she obviously considered, won—and by her. Robin was relieved, really. He was not so far out of touch with real life that he could not sense Debbie's fear of losing Mrs. Brown. So he had given Mrs. Brown his secret vision of the yellow line. Mrs. Brown went out, head high. She was wearing a kind of orange-and-green camouflage print African wrap and a pink headband.



"*Peggston was never actually fired. He was simply omitted from the renovation plans.*"

SHONA MCRURY telephones. She asks to speak to Debbie, who has in fact answered the phone, and she spends a long time congratulating her on an article on feminist art in *A Woman's Place*, an article about the amorphous things women make that do not claim the "authority" of "art works," the undignified things women "frame" that male artists have never noticed—tampons and nappies, but not only those, and images of the interior cavities of women, not the soft fleshy desirable superficies explored/exploited by men. Debbie has made a lovely center spread of the crayon drawings of an artist called Brenda Murphy, who works in the kitchen with her children, using *their* materials—crayons and felt tips on paper—to create works that are a savage and loving commentary on their lives together. Shona asks Debbie if she knows if Ms. Murphy has an agent or a gallery, and Debbie answers abstractedly, praises the interesting variety, the eclectic brilliance of Florimel's shows, and is rewarded by Shona McRury's request to see Debbie's husband's work, which is so *witty*, she thinks, she just loves that mysteriously funny little painting in Toby's loo, a jewel in a desert. Debbie thinks "a jewel in a desert" is a good phrase, but is not sure the idea of *wit* bodes well: Robin is, she recognizes, somewhat humorless in his driven state. But she fixes a real appointment for this coming Wednesday, without consulting Robin.

Robin is perturbed and threatened by the closeness of Wednesday, as Debbie has foreseen. She becomes ever so slightly minatory, and at the same time plaintive. "It isn't so easy to get a chance of getting the work seen by a gallery, you can't just pick and choose your moments or you end up with *none*, as you ought to know by now, and I've done my best for you, I pinned her down, you have to, she's so busy, even with the best will in the world. . . ."

Robin condescends, in terror, to have his work viewed.

SHONA MCRURY has topaz eyes and long, silky brown hair, like a huge ribbon, caught up at the back with a tortoiseshell comb. She wears topaz earrings, little spheres on gold chains, that exactly match her eyes, and an olive silk suit with a pleated skirt and a loose jacket over a lemon-yellow silk shirt, all of which tone in impeccably with her eyes. (Debbie, who is now a professional in these matters, sees immediately how the whole delicate and powerful effect is constructed around the eyes and reinforced by their subtle powdering of olive and gold shadow shot with a sharper green, almost malachite.) She climbs up to Robin's attic on dark-green lizard-skin shoes. Between the lizard skin and the olive silk are slightly golden metallic stockings on legs not quite beautiful—too thin, too straight. Robin goes first, then Shona McRury, then Debbie, then Mrs. Brown carrying a bottle of chilled sauvignon and three glasses on a Japanese lacquer tray. Mrs. Brown is wearing her bird-of-paradise upholstery trousers and a patchwork shirt in rainbow colors stitched together with red featherstitching. Although she has not brought herself a glass, she takes up a position inside the studio door for the showing, and makes no attempt to go away, staring with sombre interest at Shona McRury's elegance and Robin's canvases.

Debbie has not decided whether to leave Robin alone with Shona McRury or to stay and put in a word here and there. Mrs. Brown's odd behavior decides her, and is perhaps altogether decisive. It is not in Debbie's power to say anything like "You may go now, Mrs. Brown," but she can say to her, "Come on, let's leave them to it," so she does, and she and Mrs. Brown go downstairs together.

Shona McRury prowls in Robin's studio in her topaz earrings and lizard shoes. She rearranges the fetishes absent-mindedly, rattling the Monet dish in its saucer. Robin puts up a series of paintings of the fetishes in different numbers, in different lights, on different backgrounds: white silk like a glacier, crumpled newspaper, dark boards, pale boards. Her mouth is large and soft and brown. She lights a cigarette. She says, "I *like* that," and "I *like* that," and nothing else for a bit, and then begins to read the paintings as allegories. "They're modern *vanitases*, I see," says Shona McRury. "They're about the *littleness* of our life." Robin tries to keep quiet. He cannot overbear her as if she were Mrs. Brown, he cannot tell her that they are not about littleness but about the infinite terror of the brilliance of color, of which he could almost die; he doesn't think those things in words, anyway. He does at first say things like "Hmn, well, this one is solving a different kind of problem, d'you see?" and then he doesn't say anything because he can see she doesn't see, she isn't the slightest bit interested in the fact that the pictures, of which there are a very large number, never repeat; though they are all in a sense the same, they never set themselves exactly the same problem. She doesn't see that. She says, "It's a bit frightening, a bit depressing, all that empty space, isn't it, it reminds you of coffins and bare kitchen tables with no food, no sustenance, all those bare boards, doesn't it?"

"I don't think of it that way," says Robin.

"How do you think of it?"

"Well, as a series of problems, really, inexhaustible problems, of light and color, you know."

He does not say, because he does not articulate the sense he has, that he is *allowed* his patch of brilliance *because* he has dutifully and accurately and even beautifully painted all these null and neutral tones—the doves, the dusts, the dead leaves.

"Do you have any inkling of a change of direction, a next phase coming up, you know—a new focus of interest, anything like that?"

"I think if I had a big show. . .if it were all *on show together*, all the different—hm—aspects—hm—solutions, so to speak, temporary solutions. . .I might want to. . .move on to something else. It's hard to imagine, really."

"Is it?"

He does not see how crucial this little question is.

"Oh, yes. One thing at a time. I seem to have my work cut out, cut out, you know, for me, as it were, yes."

Shona McRury says, "All those pictures of lonely deck chairs in little winds, in gardens, and on beaches. When you see the first, you think, How moving, how interesting. And when you see the tenth, or the twentieth, you think, Oh, *another* solitary deck chair with a bit of wind in it, what else is there? You know?"

"I think so."

"I can *see* your work isn't like that."

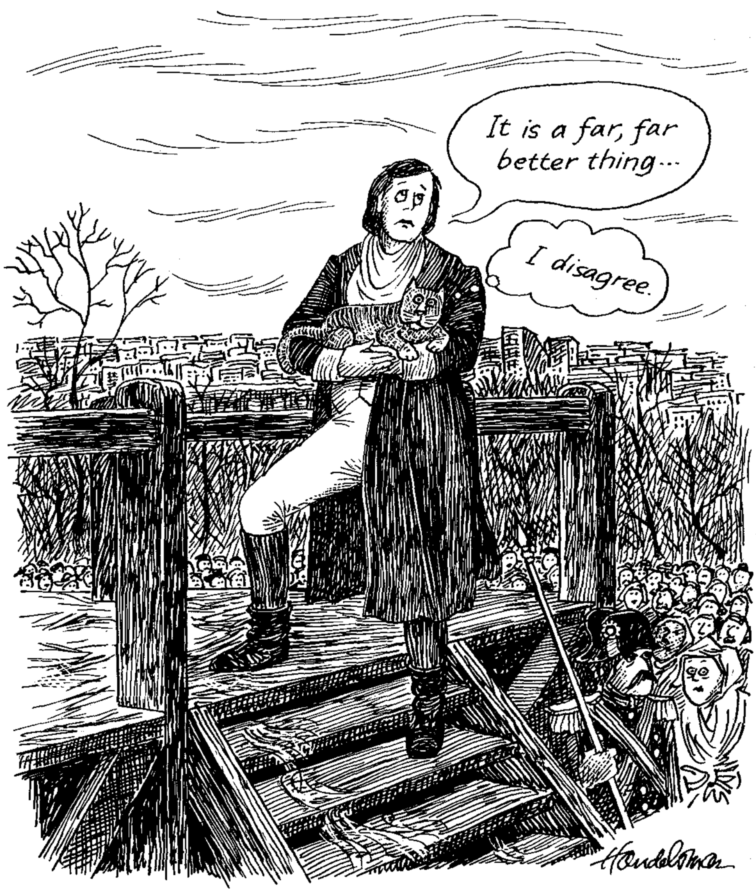
"Oh, no. Not at all like that."

"But it might look like that. To the uneducated eye."

"Might it?"

"It might."

ALTERNATIVE DICKENS


It is a far, far better thing...
I disagree.
Handelsman

SYDNEY CARTON REFUSES TO GO TO THE GUILLOTINE WITHOUT HIS CAT.

DEBBIE watches Shona McRury walk away down Tadema Road. How beautifully her olive skirt sits on her thin haunches, how perfectly, how expensively, those pleats are coerced to caress. Robin says his talk with her went well, but Debbie thinks nothing of Robin's judgment, and he does not seem seized with hope or vigor. Shona McRury's long straight band of hair flaps and sidles. Mrs. Brown, in her trenchcoat, catches

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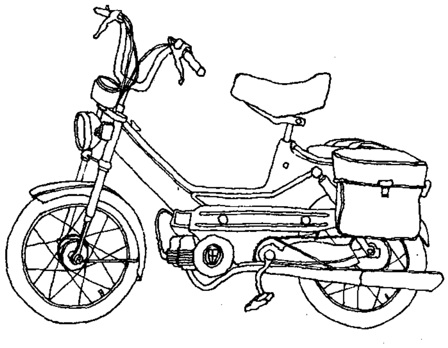
up with Shona McRury. Mrs. Brown's hair stands up like a wiry plant in a pot, inside a coil of plaited scarves, orange and lime. Mrs. Brown says something to Shona McRury, who varies her pace, turns her head, strokes her head, answers. Mrs. Brown says something else. What can Mrs. Brown have to say to Shona McRury? Debbie's mind fantastically meditates treason, subversion, sabotage. But Mrs. Brown has always been so good, so patient, despite her disdainful *look*, to which she has a right. Mrs. Brown could not want to *hurt* Robin? Mrs. Brown is in no position to hurt Robin, surely, if she did. Why should Shona McRury listen, more than out of politeness, to anything Mrs. Brown has to say? They turn the corner. Debbie feels tears bursting, somewhere inside the flesh of her cheeks, in the ducts round her nose and eyes. She hears Robin's voice on the stairs, saying it is *just like that woman* to go home without removing the wineglasses or wiping up the rings on his desk and his drawing table.

SHONA MCRURY sends a gallery postcard to Robin and Debbie jointly, saying that she really *loved* seeing the pictures, which have *real integrity*, and that things are very crowded and confused in the life of her gallery just now. Debbie knows that this means no, and suspects that the kindnesses are for her, Debbie's, possible future usefulness—that is, the possible future usefulness of *A Woman's Place* to the Florimel Gallery. She does not say that to Robin, whom she is beginning to treat like a backward and stupid child, which worries her, since that is not what he is. And when a month or two later *A Woman's Place* sends her off to the Florimel Gallery with a photographer, a nice enough, on-the-make Liverpudlian called Tom Sprot, to illustrate an article on a new feminist installation, she goes in a friendly enough mood. She is a reasonable woman; she could not have expected more from Shona McRury, and knows it.

Tom Sprot has brilliantined blond hair and baggy tartan trousers. He is very laid-back, very calm. When he gets inside the gallery, which is normally creamy and airy, he says "Wow!" and starts rushing about, peering through his lens, with alacrity. The whole space has been transformed into a kind of soft, even squashy, brilliantly colored Aladdin's cave. The walls are hung with what seem like huge tapestries, partly knitted, partly made like rag rugs, with shifting streams and islands of color, which, when looked at closely, reveal little peering mad embroidered faces, green with blue eyes, black with red eyes, pink with silver eyes. Swaying crocheted cobwebs hang from the ceiling, inhabited by dusky spiders and swarms of sequinned blue flies with gauzy wings. These things are brilliantly pretty, but not like a stage set: they are elegant and sinister, there is something horrid about the netted pockets with the heaped blue bodies. The spiders themselves are menaced by phalanxes of feather dusters, all kinds of feathers, a peacock fan, a fluffy nylon cyan-blue-and-shocking-pink tube, a lime-green-and-orange palm tree on a golden staff wound with lamé. The cavern has a crazy kind of resemblance to a lived-in room. Chests of drawers, made of orange crates covered with patchworks of wallpaper—from vulgar silver roses to William Morris birds, from Regency plum stripes to Laura Ashley pink sprigs—reveal half-open treasure chests with mazy compartments containing crazy collections of things. White bone buttons. Glass stoppers. Chicken bones. Cufflinks, all single. Medicine bottles with lacquered labels, full of iridescent beads and cod-liver-oil capsules. Pearlized plastic beads and sunflower seeds, dolls' teaspoons and drifts of variegated tea leaves and dead rose petals. Sugar mice, some half chewed. String—bright green, waxed red, hairy brown—running from compartment to compartment.

There are pieces of furniture, or creatures, standing about in all this. A large tump, or possibly a giant pouf, layered in skirts of scarlet and orange, grass green and emerald, dazzlingly juxtaposed, reveals, if the wools are parted, a circle of twenty or thirty little knitted pink breasts, and above that a ring of little chocolate-colored satin ones: a kind of squat Diana of Ephesus without face or hands. A long bolsterlike creature might be a thin woman or a kind of lizard or even a piece of the seashore. It is mostly knitted, in rich browns and greens, with scalloped fronds and trailing, weedy "limbs," or maybe tentacles—there appear to be more than four, as one walks round it. From a distance it has a pleasing look of rock pools crusted with limpets and anemones. Closer, it is seen to be plated with an armor of crocheted bosses, violet and saffron, some tufted with crimson or trailing threads of blood-colored embroidery silks.



The centerpiece is a kind of dragon-and-chained-lady scene—St. George and the Princess Saba, Perseus and Andromeda. The dragon has a cubic blue body and a long concertina neck. It has a spinal crest of mulberry taffeta plates, blanket-stitched, something like the horrent scallops of the stegosaurus. It is an odd dragon, recumbent among its own coils, a dragon related to a millipede, with hundreds of black, shining, wiry tentacular legs that expose their scarlet linings and metal filaments. It is knitted yet solid; it raises a square jaw that has a woollen beard and some teeth dripping with matted hair and broken hairpins, multicolored fluffy foam and cotton spittle. Its eyes are bland blue rounds with soft chenille lashes. It is a Hoover and a dragon both, inert and suffocating.

And the lady is flesh-colored and twisted, her body is broken and concertinaed, she is draped flat on a large stone, her long limbs are pink nylon, her chains are twisted brassieres and demented petticoats, pajama cords and sinister strained tights. She has a Cubist aspect, crossed with Diana of Ephesus again; her breasts are a string of detached and battered shoulder pads three above two; her pubic hair is a shrunk angora bonnet. Her face is embroidered on petit-point canvas on a round embroidery frame: it is half done, a Botticelli Venus with a chalk outline, a few blond tresses, cutout eyeholes stitched round with spiky black lashes. At first you think that the male figure is totally absent, and then you see him—them—minuscule in the crannies of the rock: a plastic knight on horseback, once silver, now mud green, and a toy soldier with a broken sword and a battered helmet, both of whom have obviously been through the wheel of the washing machine, more than once.

THERE is someone in the gallery window hanging a series of letters, gold on rich chocolate, on a kind of high-tech washing line with tiny crimson pegs. The letters say "Sheba Brown: Work in Various Materials 1975-90." Underneath the line of letters a photograph goes up—Debbie goes out into the street to look at it—a photograph of Mrs. Brown under a kind of wild crown of woven scarves, with her old carved look and an added look of sly amusement in the corners of mouth and eyes. Her skin has come out duskier than it "really" is, her bones are sculpted, she resembles a cross between the Mona Lisa and a Benin bronze.

As far as Debbie knows, Mrs. Brown is at this moment Hoovering her stairs. She cannot think. She thinks several things at once. She thinks with pure delight of the unexpectedness and splendor of "Sheba" for Mrs. Brown. She thinks inconsequentially of a ball she once went to, a Chelsea Arts ball, in the mulberry-colored dress that is now the dragon scales. She thinks, with a terrible flutter of unreadiness to think about this, that Mrs. Brown will now for certain leave. She wonders why Mrs. Brown said nothing: was it a desire to shock, or a simpler desire to startle, or the courtesy of the old Mrs. Brown, aware that Debbie could not do without her, thinking how to break the news, or was she—she certainly is in part—*simply* secretive and cautious? Debbie thinks with terrible protectiveness of Robin in his attic, explaining his fetishes to Mrs. Brown, and roaring, as he will roar no more, about her forays into his workplace. She does not feel for a moment that Mrs. Brown has "stolen" Robin's exhibition, but she has a miserable fear that Robin may think that.

And she feels something else, looking at Sheba Brown's apparently inexhaustible and profligate energy of colorful invention. She feels a kind of subdued envy that carries with it an invigorating sting. She thinks of the

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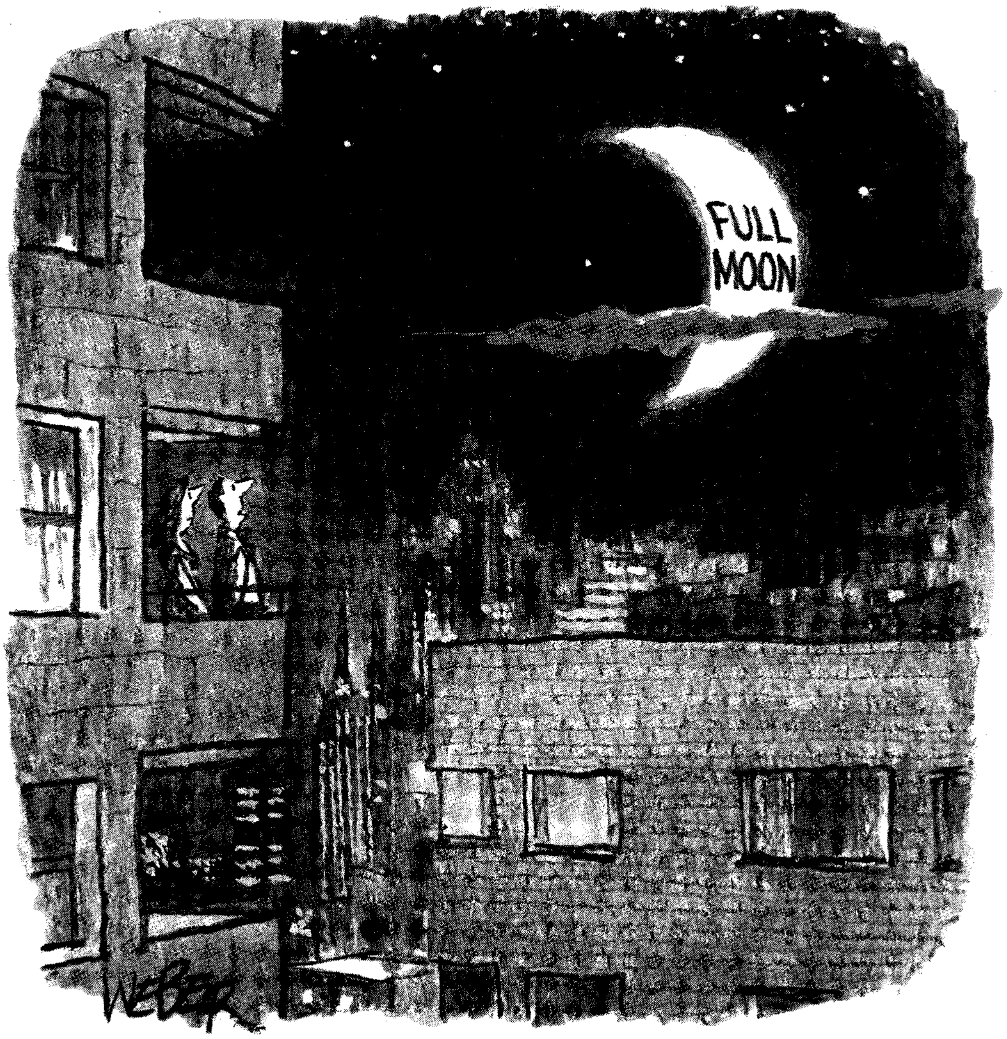


"The recession seems to be deepening."

• •

feel of the wooden blocks she used to cut.

Tom Sprot comes up, full of excitement. He has discovered a chest of drawers full of tangled thread and of smaller chests of drawers inside it all full of tangled thread and smaller-still chests of drawers. He is holding the text of an interview done by Richard Dixon for *A Woman's Place*, the manuscript of which has just been delivered hot to the gallery by a messenger on a motorbike.

Debbie skims through it.

> Sheba Brown lives in a council flat, surrounded by her own work, her wall hangings and cushions. She is in her forties, of part-Guyanese, part-Irish ancestry, and has had a hard life. Her work is full of feminist comments on the trivia of our daily life, on the boredom of the quotidian, but she has no sour reflections, no chip on her shoulder; she simply makes everything absurd and surprisingly beautiful with an excess of inventive wit. Some of her hangings resemble the work of Richard Dadd, with their intricate woven backgrounds, though they obviously owe something also to the luxurious innovations of Kaffe Fassett. But, unlike Richard Dadd, Sheba Brown is not mad or obsessed; she is richly sane, and her conversation is good humored and funny.
>
> She has brought up two sons, and gathered the materials for her work on a mixture of social security and her meagre earnings as a cleaner. She gets her materials from everywhere—dumpsters, jumble sales, castoffs, going through other people's rubbish, clearing up after school fêtes. She says she began on her "soft sculpture" by accident, really: she had an "urge to construct," but had to make things that could be packed away into small spaces at night. Her two most prized possessions are a knitting machine and a storage room in the basement of her block of flats, which she has by arrangement with the caretaker. "Once I had the room I could make boxlike things as well as squashy ones," she says, smiling with satisfaction.
>
> She says she owes a great deal to one family for whom she has worked, an "artistic family" who taught her about colors (not that she needed "teaching"—her instinct for new, shocking effects and juxtapositions is staggering) and broadened her ideas of what a work of art might be. . . .

Debbie goes home thoughtful. Mrs. Brown has done her day's work and left. Robin is fretful. He does not want spaghetti for supper, he is sick of pasta, he thinks they must have had pasta every night for a fortnight. Debbie considers him as he sits twisting his fettuccine with a fork, and thinks that on the whole it is probably safe to tell him *nothing* about Mrs. Brown and her Aladdin's cave; since he never takes an interest in *A Woman's Place*, she can hide that issue from him, and she can probably keep other reviews from him, too—he doesn't read much, it depresses him.

No sooner has she worked all this out than it is ruined by Jamie, who rushes into the kitchen crying, "Come and see, come and see, Mrs. Brown is on the telly!"

When neither of his parents moves he cries louder, "She's got an exhibition of things like Muppets with that gallery lady who came here, do come and look, Daddy, they're *bizarre*."

So Robin goes and looks. Sheba Brown looks down her long nose at him out of the screen and says, "Well, it all just comes to me in a kind of colored rush. I just like putting things together, there's so much in the world, isn't there, and making things is a natural enough way of showing your excitement. . . ."

The screen briefly displays the Hoover dragon and the washing-bound lady.

"No, no, I don't do it out of *resentment*," says Sheba Brown enthusiastically in voice-over as the camera pursues the strangling twisted tights. "No, I find it all *interesting*, I told you. Working as a cleaning lady, O.K., you learn a lot, it's honest, you can see things *anywhere at all* to make things up from, that's one thing I know. People are funny, really, you can't be a cleaning lady for long without learning *that*. . . ."

Debbie looks at Robin. Robin looks at Sheba Brown. Sheba Brown vanishes and is replaced by a jolly avuncular Jack Tar surrounded by simpering infants and brandishing a plate full of steaming rectangular Fishy Morsels. Robin says, "That, round that woman sort of thing's neck—that was that school tie I lost."

"You didn't lose it. You threw it out."

"No, I didn't. How would I have done that? I might go back to some school reunion, might I not, you never know, and it isn't likely I shall go and waste any money on *another* hideous purple tie, is it?"

"It was in the wastepaper basket. I said she could have it."

"Mummy," says Jamie, "can we go and *see* Mrs. Brown's squashy sculptures?"

"We will all go," says Robin. "Courtesy requires that we all go. And see what else she has filched."

MRS. BROWN comes in the next day accompanied by a gray-haired sylph in ballet tights and Nikes.

"Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Brown," says Jamie. (It is the school holidays.) "Mrs. Brown, we saw you on the telly. And your name is beautiful, and I think the Muppet sort of things and the little faces are stupiferous."

Mrs. Brown says, "It looks as though I can't come for a bit, Mrs. Dennison. I hadn't quite taken in what a change in my life it was going to make, showing anyone my things. I just suddenly got it into my head that it was time they were seen by someone, you know how it is, and things got taken on from there, out of my control rather, though I'm not complaining. I kept meaning to say something, but it didn't seem to be the moment, and I was concerned for you, how you would take it, for you do need someone to rely on, as we both know. Now, this here is Mrs. Stimpson, who will do exactly what I did, I'll show her all the ropes, and how not to interfere with Mr. Dennison, and I really do think you'll hardly notice, Mrs. Dennison. It'll be just the same."

Debbie stares silently at Mrs. Brown. Mrs. Brown drops her eyes and then looks up, slightly flushed.

"You do see how it was?" she asks, steadily enough.

Debbie thinks, The worst thing is, if we had been friends she would have shown *me* her things. But we weren't. I only thought we were.

Sheba Brown says, "We understood each other, Mrs. Dennison. But no one's unique. Mrs. Stimpson is quite reliable and resourceful. I wouldn't let you down by bringing anyone who wasn't. She'll be just like me."

Debbie says, "And does Mrs. Stimpson make secret works of art?"

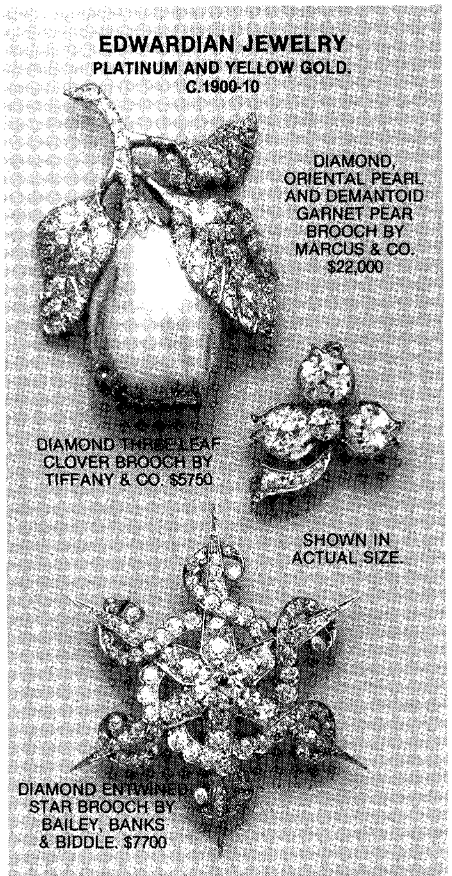
"Now, *that*," says Sheba Brown, "you will have to find out for yourself."

Mrs. Stimpson's young-old face has a firm, knowing little smile on it. She says, "We can but try, Mrs. Dennison. Without prejudice."

"I suppose so," says Debbie. Before she can open her mouth again, Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Stimpson have gone into the kitchen. Debbie hears the coffee grinder. They will bring her a cup of coffee. It will all be more or less the same.

OR not quite the same. For one thing, Debbie goes back to making woodcuts—"A Book of Bad Fairies" and "A Book of Good Fairies," which have a certain success in the world of book illustration. Some of the more exotic fairies have the carved, haughty face of Sheba Brown, and some the sweet, timeless face of Mrs. Stimpson. And Robin? He roars at Mrs. Stimpson, who humors him by appearing to be very flurried and rushing energetically to and fro at his behest. He also develops an interest in Oriental mythology, and buys several books of tantric mandalas and prayer wheels. One day Debbie goes up to his room and finds a new kind of painting on the easel: geometric, brightly colored, highly organized, a kind of woven pattern of flames and limbs with a recurring motif of a dark, glaring face with red eyes and a protruding red tongue. "Kali the Destroyer," says Mrs. Stimpson knowledgeably, at Debbie's elbow. "It's a picture of Kali the Destroyer." It is not right, thinks Debbie, that the black goddess should be a simplified travesty of Sheba Brown, that prolific weaver of bright webs. But at the same time she recognizes a new kind of loosed, slightly savage energy in Robin's use of color and movement. "It's *got* something," says Mrs. Stimpson pleasantly. "I do really think it's *got* something." Debbie has to agree. It has indeed got something.

—A. S. BYATT



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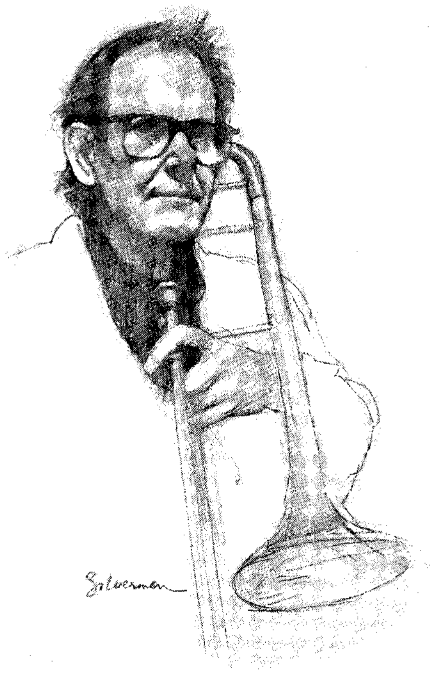


WHERE around New York can you hear the elusive master trombonist Jimmy Knepper? During the past couple of years, he appeared in most of the half-dozen concerts given by the American Jazz Orchestra at Cooper Union, but at each one he only took five or six choruses, some of them reshapings of transcribed solos by such earlier masters as Duke Ellington's Tricky Sam Nanton and Count Basie's Dicky Wells; he spent four nights at the West End Gate in a quintet put together by his friend and admirer the pianist Dick Katz; he led a trio for one night at Bradley's; he led the repertory group Mingus Dynasty for two six-night stints at the Village Vanguard; he turned up for several nights with Buck Clayton's swing band at Fat Tuesday's; and, for his own pleasure and to keep his lip and arm limber, he played occasional one-night stands at the Dock of the Bay, on Staten Island, not far from where he lives. The tenor saxophonist and pianist Loren Schoenberg played with him there, and he recently said of Knepper, "Jimmy is the most flexible of all the trombonists. He has built his own phraseology out of Charlie Parker's vocabulary. He's not trombonistic, and his style is self-effacing. The dazzling way he gets around the instrument, you couldn't play what he plays on any other instrument. He never loses coherence, and he never relies on devices. In fact, he has an abhorrence of clichés. Whenever the American Jazz Orchestra plays a warhorse, Jimmy goes at re-creating whoever's old solo in eight different ways before he gets it right. He's always willing to let his music take full responsibility for itself. There is something calming about his playing, a repose. What he plays and what he is as a person form a whole, and that's very rare among musicians. Jimmy functions best in surroundings someone else creates. He's a better sideman—horrible word—than leader. You make a frame for him, and he'll make a beautiful picture to go in it. Jimmy is also a consummate musical copyist. His musical manuscripts are functional, neat, inspired, like his playing. He is also a crossword-puzzle maven. When I go on the road, I like to take a crossword puzzle to bed at night. It relaxes me and keeps me company. Once, when Jimmy and I were on the road together, our puzzles got mixed up, and when I got into bed and picked up my puzzle, which I had been struggling with, I discovered I had Jimmy's. It was completely filled out, and I was devastated and couldn't get to sleep for a long time."

Dick Katz talked about Knepper several days before they worked together at the West End Gate: "Jimmy has a vocal way of playing that is matched to bebop lines. His intervals sound impossible, but he makes them. He lays way back rhythmically. He rarely plays on the beat, or in the pocket, as musicians say. He places his notes in the cracks—here, there, everywhere. He's a meticulous musician. He gets to every job early, and warms up with long tones. And he's a first-rate composer—very Ellingtonian. When he puts a group together for a gig, he has a hands-off policy; he lets things happen. He's an easygoing man, but he's not easy to know."

Knepper looks like what grocery clerks looked like when there were grocery clerks. He's tall and polelike and bespectacled, and when he starts to sit down he bends in the middle as if he were hinged. Every time he appears somewhere, he seems to be thinner. "I lose a pound a year, and if I live long enough I'll just disappear," he said recently. He has a high forehead and Clark Gable ears, set low on his head, like stabilizers. His hair is puzzling: sometimes it looks fluffy, and sometimes it looks thin and pasted on. He wears heavy horn-rims that tend to slip down his nose, hiding his eyes. Smiles occasionally start at the edges of his face, then withdraw, but most of the time his face is expressionless. It's a mask that is not really a mask, though, because Knepper hides little when he talks. He talks easily and steadily and slowly, and he punctuates what he says by puffing on short cigarettes that he rolls as he speaks. They keep going out, and that makes them last a long time. He talked about his life not long ago, and here is some of what he said:

"I've been involved in landlordism in recent years. My wife, Maxine, and I live on Ward's Hill, in northern Staten Island. You can walk to the ferry in twenty minutes. We have a view of the city, of Brooklyn Bridge, even of the George Washington Bridge. We stumbled on the house in 1961, and buying it was one of the best moves we ever made. We own another house, with a five-room apartment in it and a ten-room apartment, and we rent both of them out. That house only cost nine thousand five hundred dollars, if you can believe it. Some years, it makes more money than I do. We also own a house with two apartments in Port Richmond, and we rent that out, too. And I inherited a house in Los Angeles from an aunt, and that's just started renting. All this real estate has kept me in the music business without me panicking and having to look for some other kind of work. In fact, the mortgages are all paid and we own everything outright, and that makes my declining years more relaxed.

"We moved to Staten Island from a cold-water flat on East Twenty-fifth Street in 1959. One day, when our two kids were little and Maxine was sick, I took the real-estate section of the paper and a map and went to Staten Island. I figured Staten Island would have some trees and some room. I found a little house on the road to the Verrazano Bridge. Then we moved to the house we're in. We have a boy and a girl. Robin is thirty-six, and she lives in Matamoras, Pennsylvania. She has three little boys, and she's a social worker. Our son is Timothy Jay—both children were named after birds—and he lives in the house in Los Angeles. I sent him out there three years ago to fix it up, but nothing happened, and we had to go out and light a fire under him. He's thirty-four and he used to drive a cab in New York at night, carrying a knife and a crowbar for self-protection. I didn't think much of that, so I sent him to Los Angeles to stir up his life and give him some responsibility.

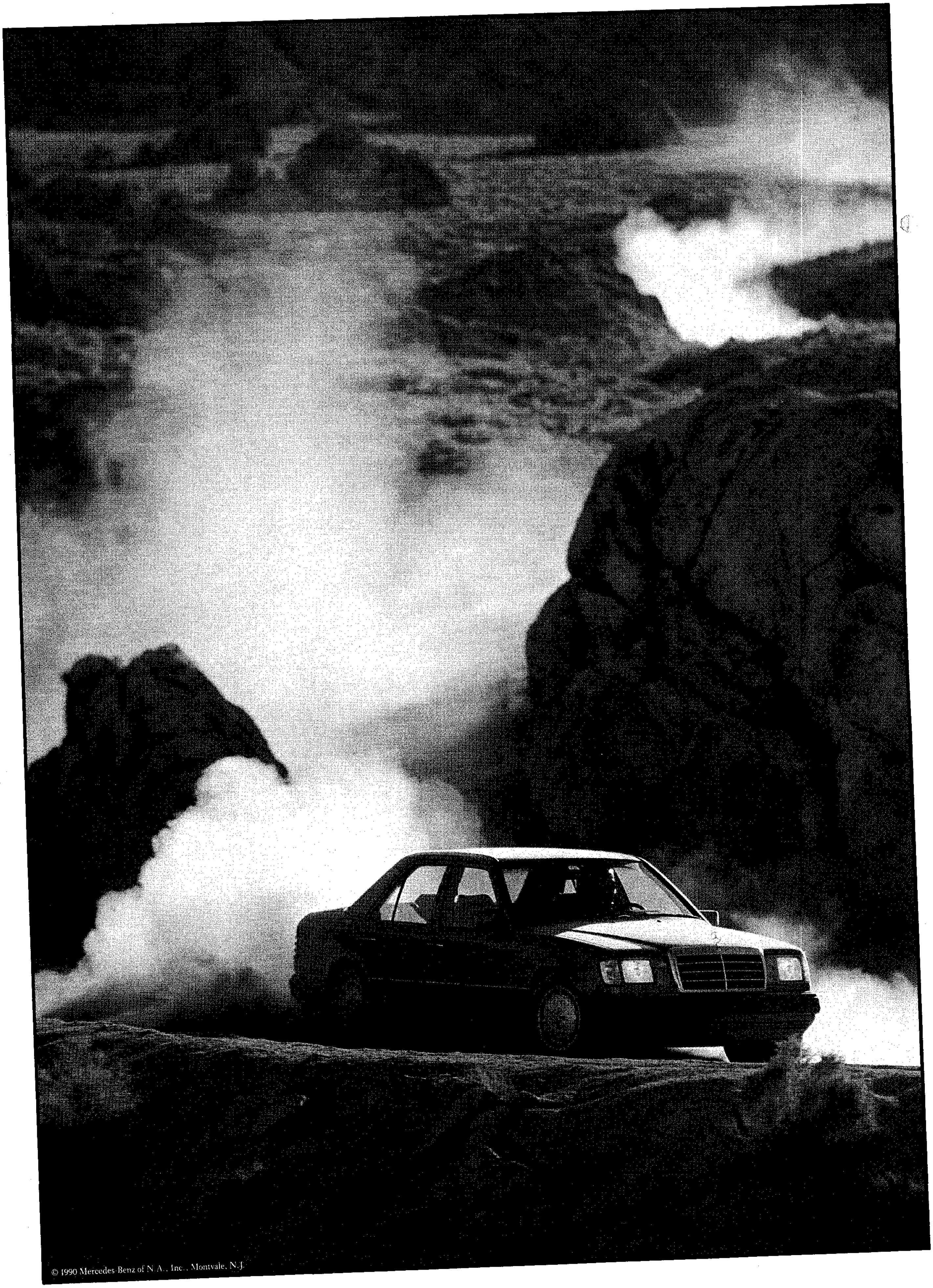
"Los Angeles is where I was born—on November 22, 1927. I have a brother, Robert, who's a year and a half older. He's a librarian in L.A. He's a family person, and he keeps sending me copies of death certificates of people vaguely related to us. My mother was a nurse and my father a cop. She divorced him when I was three, because he'd got in the habit of knocking her down. I only saw him three or four times. My brother looked up my father's career later on, and found out that he killed his third or fourth wife, and that he was an alcoholic. My mother, who was just a little over five feet, spent her whole life nursing. When I was four, she put my brother and me in Page's Military Academy, on Cochran Avenue. We boarded, and went home on weekends. When I was seven, the bandmaster gave me an alto horn to play, then a baritone. When I was nine, he gave me a trombone. He said I had a trombone mouth. We also went to a Catholic military school, even though we were non-Catholic, and I finally graduated from a public high school in 1944."

JAZZ musicians were nomads when Knepper came up. Most of them were in big bands, which still travelled up and down the country to play at theatres and in ballrooms and hotels and night clubs. But the big bands, beset by economic problems, were dwindling, and Knepper was one of the last graduates. (The on-the-job training they offered has never been replaced.) After teen-age stints on the West Coast with the bands of Frank Morehead and Chuck Cascales, he went on the road with Tommy Reynolds, quit, and returned to Los Angeles to work with his friend Dean Benedetti. In 1948, Knepper joined Freddie Slack's band at the Sherman Hotel, in Chicago. ("I started taking goofballs and was fired. A youthful indiscretion.") Later that year, Knepper hitched across the country with Benedetti and helped him to record Charlie Parker on Fifty-second Street. (These legendary on-the-spot recordings have been issued in full by Mosaic.) Between 1950 and 1951, he was with Charlie Spivak and Charlie Barnet. He also worked for a stunning week with Charlie Parker at the Showboat in Philadelphia, with Al Haig on piano, Tommy Potter on bass, and Roy Haynes on drums. "The first night, Parker kept lurching to his right, and I thought he had some sort of tic," Knepper said. "But the spring on his concert F-sharp key was broken, and he had to lean sharply to the right to make it open. Parker was astonishing. I could hear every kind of music in his solos—bits of Wagner, a Rudy Wiedoeft phrase, Stravinsky, Bartók. Musicians are technique-minded now and they can play a thousand notes a chorus, but I have never known anyone who played more cleanly. He articulated each note. Parker must have done his woodshedding"—practicing—"when he was very young, because he didn't practice. Someone like John Coltrane never stopped. He'd practice in his dressing room, on the bus, and at home. Drinking didn't seem to affect Parker's playing. He'd accept drink after drink during intermission and put away maybe a pint of whiskey. They'd lean him against the wall when he got back on the stand, and off he'd go. Parker gave the impression he knew everything. Architects thought he must have had architectural training, poets thought he was a poet, painters thought he was a painter. You could never catch Bird out."

Knepper married Maxine Fields in 1954, in Tucson. She had played trumpet with the International Sweethearts of Rhythm and with Ina Ray Hutton. She was born in Elkhart, Indiana, and her father had been a trombone player. Knepper's nomadism continued. In 1956, he got a job with Ralph Marterie in Chicago, and Maxine joined him, their year-old daughter in tow. Knepper had converted Maxine into a drummer, and while they were in Chicago she sometimes worked with a pianist in Sault Sainte Marie. They "milled around" Chicago, living in a hotel that had a Murphy bed in the kitchen. They bought a car, and Knepper quit Marterie and they drove to New York, arriving on Halloween in a terrible rainstorm. Knepper soon ran into the alto saxophonist Gene Quill, and Quill got him a job with Claude Thornhill. They toured Air Force bases in North Africa, Germany, and France. Knepper had started writing arrangements, and he did two Elvis Presley tunes for Thornhill. When he got back to New York, the trombonist Willie Dennis told Knepper that he was leaving Charlie Mingus's band, and Mingus, remembering Knepper from a one-night gig in Los Angeles ten years before, called him.

THE epochal part of Knepper's life began. Mingus, who died in 1979, was a brilliant bassist, an unruly if highly original composer, and an eccentric, tyrannical bandleader, who fired musicians on the stand and lectured his audiences. Working for Mingus either made you or broke you: whatever happened, it was an ineradicable experience. Knepper lasted, off and on, for four years.

"The first Mingus rehearsal I went to was in his apartment, on Fifty-third Street," Knepper said. "I discovered he had a prejudice against writing his pieces down. Instead, he'd hum a few bars and say, 'All right. You got that?' Then he'd hum another few bars. It took hours and hours to learn anything, but there was an advantage to Mingus's method. When you see a bunch of triplets and dotted eighths and sixteenths on paper, you tend to read



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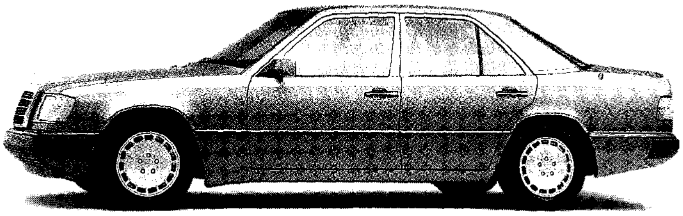

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them mechanically, without getting the right emphasis and smoothness. Mingus gave you all that in his hums. I made my first record date with him, and I think we did 'The Clown,' then 'Reincarnation of a Love Bird' and the 'Haitian Fight Song.' We worked at the Vanguard and the Half Note, but jobs were spotty. We also recorded for Atlantic and Columbia. In 1960, Mingus got work in San Francisco, and we made a nightmare trip to the Coast. Roland Kirk and Doug Watkins and Dannie Richmond were in the band, and we went in three cars—a Buick convertible that Mingus wanted to sell on the Coast, because he thought he'd get more money for it out there; a Cadillac limo; and a Peugeot. Dannie Richmond drove by himself in the Buick, Mingus and I were in the Cadillac, and the rest in the Peugeot. When we got to the Holland Tunnel, Mingus asked the guy in the toll booth, 'How do you get to San Francisco?' The tollman said, 'Take the New Jersey Turnpike until it ends, the Pennsylvania Turnpike until it ends, the Ohio Turnpike until it ends, and the Indiana Turnpike until it ends. Then ask someone how to go from there.' When we got outside the city, Mingus said, 'Jim, you drive. I don't have a license,' and I drove most of the rest of the way. Right off, we lost touch with the other cars, and Mingus, accusing me of losing them on purpose, started saying things like, 'It probably makes you nervous driving in a caravan with a bunch of niggers.' But it went in one ear and out the other. If there is one thing I've never been hung up about, it's color. The trip took four days, and we only had three proper meals. The rest of the time we ate fried chicken and candy bars. We did two weeks in San Francisco and a week in L.A., and I quit.

"Except for a record date in 1961, I didn't see Mingus again until 1962, just before the disastrous concert he gave in Town Hall with that huge, thirty-piece band. He called me and said he needed help—would I copy some music for him? After I started, he said he also wanted me to write background figures, but I told him it was his music and he should do it, it should be his composition, and suddenly he called me a white faggot and punched me. I thought I'd better fall down in case he decided to hit me again, and I did. There was no blood, or anything, but he broke off a capped tooth in front and exposed a nerve, and of course I couldn't play. People told me I should do something, so I got hold of a musicians' lawyer, Max Cohen, and sued Mingus, and he was found guilty of criminal assault and put on probation. My teeth problems are still going on. For a long time, I had a removable steel bridge that hooked on to four top teeth. Now I have dentures on top and a fixed bridge on the bottom. I can push notes out, but I have trouble with slurs. And it's hard to play with a plunger mute, which puts pressure right up in your face. I didn't play with Mingus again until the late seventies, when he put together a group for the Newport Festival. I saw him for the last time not long before he died. He was confined to a wheelchair, and I learned later that he had told someone that I had more understanding of his music than anyone who had ever worked with him.

"Mingus talked a lot of nonsense about whites, but he married three white women, and he had great respect for white musicians like John LaPorta and Gil Evans and Lennie Tristano. People who knew Mingus for forty years said he was no good, but I liked him. He had trouble with black and white, and he was childish and all the rest, but he had exuberance and warmth. I have mixed feelings about Mingus's music. Some of the pieces, like 'Goodbye Pork Pie Hat,' are good, but a lot of the others are bullshit. He told me once that all he wrote was ditties. He said that Duke Ellington wrote compositions but he wrote ditties, and I think that—and his inability to complete many of the things he wrote—bothered him most of his life."

TWO more musicians talk about Knepper. The first is the alto saxophonist Lee Konitz, who came up just after Charlie Parker: "Jimmy is still searching for ways to do better what he does. He was in my nine-piece band in the seventies, but I've had occasion to play with him one to one with just a rhythm section, and he was ready to mix it up and play counterpoint, or whatever. He was very adventurous. We rode together recently on the subway—it was after the memorial service for Mel Lewis—and he wanted to know how to play free, without any underlying structure. He thought I had found a way to do that. I told him he was a moldy fig, and he laughed."

The second is John Lewis, who, in addition to being the leader of the Modern Jazz Quartet, is the musical director of the American Jazz Orchestra: "Jimmy is one of the most meticulous musical people I know. His range of expression is wide, wide, wide. The wonderful notes he plays are not necessarily picked out of the chords. Chords are secondary to his musical ideas. We do a lot of repertory work in the orchestra, and when I give him a transcribed solo from an Ellington or Lunceford record he takes that solo and absorbs it and turns it into something new and beautiful."

THE West Coast reedman Gary Foster once said of his friend Warne Marsh, "His sound on the tenor is completely untenorlike, just as Jimmy Knepper's sound on the trombone is completely untrombonelike. Both men seem to use their instruments simply as vessels to contain their notes. They could be playing any instrument." The slide trombone is a bully, because of both its wayward tone and the constant challenge of finding the right notes with the slide, and it has dominated many of its players. Fighting back, they have cracked frenzied jokes on the instrument, making rude noises and elephantine slurs. Or they have attempted to tame it by making it sound limpid and honeylike (Tommy Dorsey, Lawrence Brown, Bobby Byrne). But Knepper, using little vibrato and no funny noises, sings on his instrument. He has an endless, uncontainable melodic river in his head, and it pours out through his trombone. He likes long phrases, some of them more than eight bars and made up of an intricate mixture of triplets and eighth notes, generally arranged comfortably behind the beat. These phrases often start in odd places and end in odd places, and this oddness is hypnotic. The notes he chooses are almost always surprising; they may be outside the chords of a tune or beyond its melody. Knepper's solos are delivered whole and at one volume and seemingly in one breath. He has never played a melodramatic solo in his life.

Knepper talks about his playing the

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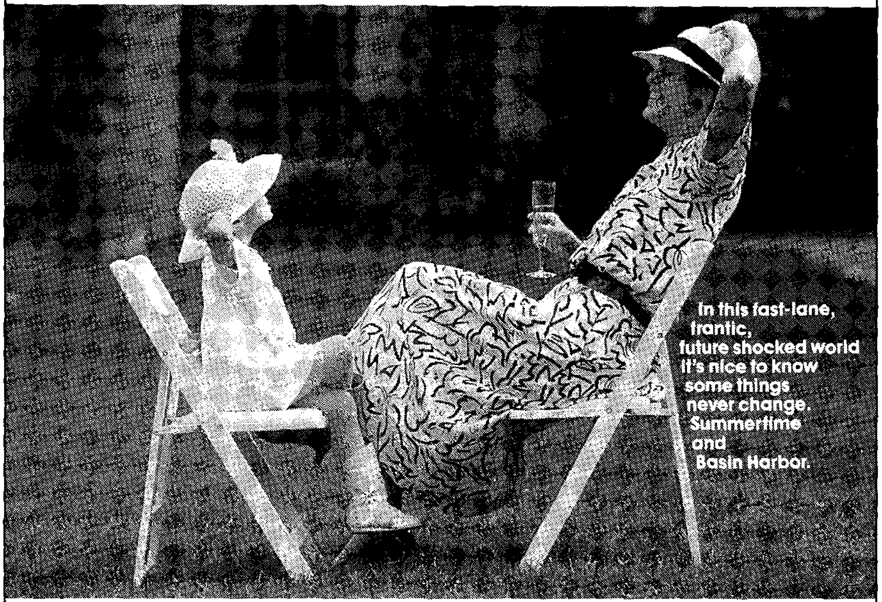

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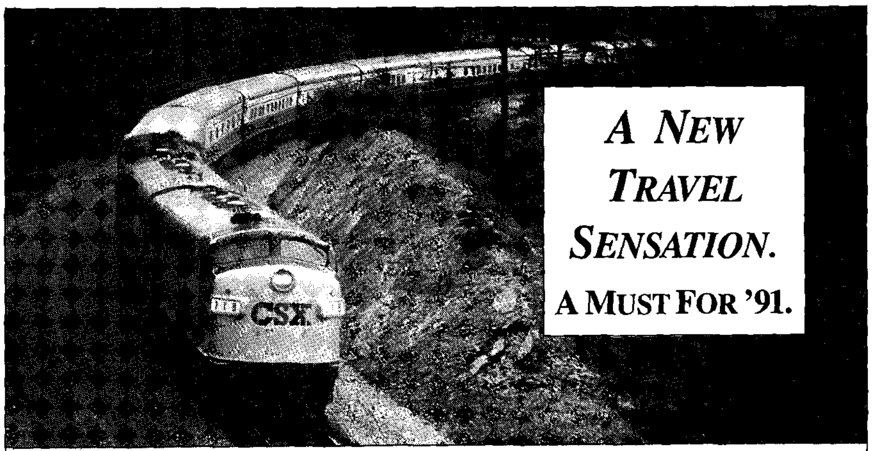

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way he talks about everything—laconically and as a matter of fact. "I have never been ambitious or goal-oriented," he said. "I've never beaten my own drum, or gone at the business of being rich and famous, or even just famous. I tend to work when I get called. Actually, the longest jobs I have had have been outside of jazz, in Broadway shows. I did about thirteen hundred performances of 'Funny Girl,' or three years and three months, and I did a year and three months in the revival of 'On Your Toes.' Getting that check every week was a pleasure.

"Improvisation is a great mystery. You play something, and you play an answer to it. Then you play something to wrap it up. Nothing is going through your mind; you're not thinking of anything. Every now and then, you surprise yourself. Where did *that* come from? So many musicians have told me that they learn the lyrics of the tunes they play, and the lyrics go through their minds when they improvise. I can't understand that. Lyrics would just get in my way. And I try not to think about the chords. I learn them, then I forget them. When I was coming up, I listened to Ray Nance and Sweets Edison and Buck Clayton. And to Lester Young and Charlie Parker, and to that monster technician Lawrence Brown. I used to transcribe Bird's solos and try and play them on my trombone. Lately, I've been working on a system of alternative positions on my slide. I play a harmonic-overtone series. Every note on the trombone is available in two or three places on the slide. If you're moving your slide out, it makes sense to keep going instead of pulling the slide back, then going out and in, out and in. Your playing is much smoother using the alternative positions. Of course, this system is chancy. Some of the notes in the alternative positions are slightly out of place, and there is always the possibility you will miss one. I'm a pretty good teacher, but I don't like doing it. Anyway, I can tell somebody everything I know in fifteen minutes.

"Musicians of my generation either are keeling over or have lost the spark. But I'll never retire. Last year, I appeared in public maybe forty days out of three hundred and sixty-five. You could say I'm in semi-retirement, but I'm a musician, so I've been semi-retired for the last forty years."

—WHITNEY BALLIETT

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THE VIETNAM YEARS—III

I LEFT the White House shortly after midnight March 31, 1968, after a long, dramatic, and emotional evening. I was saddened by the personal tragedy involved in Lyndon Johnson's decision, announced in a television speech that had stunned the nation, not to seek reëlection. But I also felt deeply gratified that we had started on the road toward the end of the Vietnam War: a major victory had been won—the end of escalation in Vietnam after a decade of a steadily increased commitment. I could not have imagined that, as President Johnson's Secretary of Defense, I would wage a constant struggle over Vietnam from that day until the end of the Administration.

Despite his overwhelming personality and his unique understanding of political power, Lyndon Johnson during this period acted more like a legislative leader, seeking a consensus among people who were often irreconcilably opposed to one another, than like a decisive Commander-in-Chief giving his subordinates orders. Faced with serious disagreement among his principal advisers, he had approached the difficult decisions of 1968 cautiously, even hesitantly. Thus, he had been much relieved when, near the end of March, the military, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Ellsworth Bunker, our Ambassador to Vietnam, and I all agreed that the American bombing of North Vietnam should be curtailed. But unity over a limited bombing halt masked a continuing and profound disagreement over what the President's March 31st speech meant and what our goal in Vietnam should be for the ten months remaining in Johnson's Presidency.

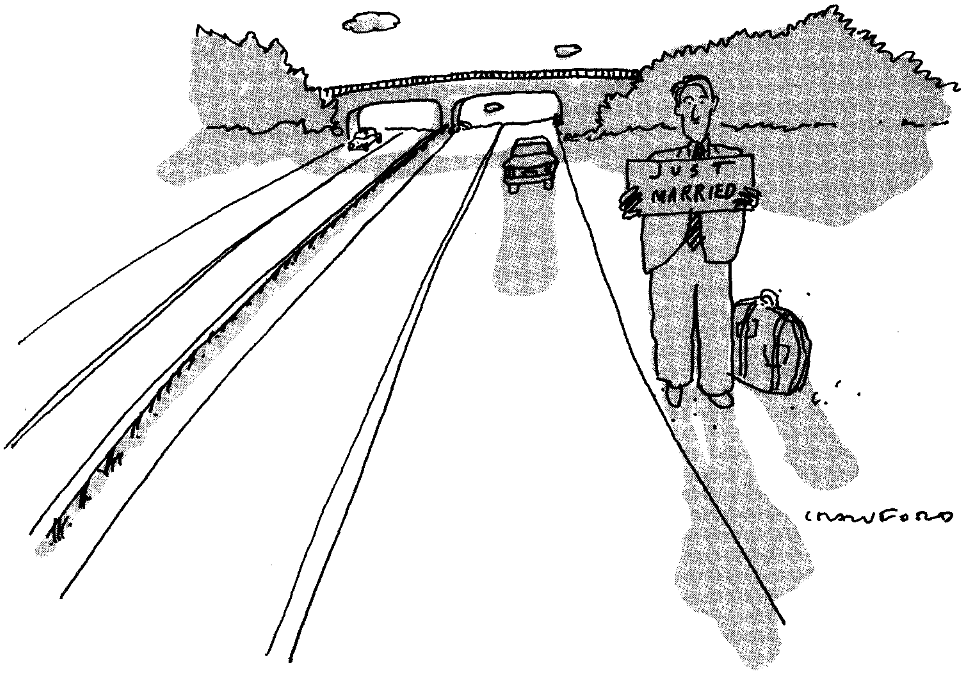
During the late spring, the Administration split into two factions. In one camp were Secretary Rusk; Walt W. Rostow, the President's national-security assistant; Ambassador Bunker; Maxwell Taylor, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and former Ambassador to Vietnam; Supreme Court Justice Abe Fortas, who was a longtime confidant of Johnson's; and the entire American military command. In the other camp were Averell Harriman, the career diplomat and negotiator; Cyrus Vance, the former Deputy Secretary of Defense; Under-Secretary of State Nicholas deB. Katzenbach; Arthur Goldberg, Ambassador to the United Nations; Paul Nitze, the Deputy Secretary of Defense; Paul Warnke, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs; and I. Vice-President Hubert Humphrey supported our group when he was consulted, but that was not very often. At the center of this tug-of-war was Lyndon Johnson, uncertain of what legacy he wanted to leave behind in Vietnam.

The roots of the dispute were inherent in his March 31st speech. What had he intended? Had he deliberately sacrificed his political career in order to seek an end to the war, or had he put forward a series of half measures designed to shore up domestic support, at a lower cost, without changing our objective in Vietnam? Did he know what his objective was?

There will always be disagreement on this complex and elusive question. I suspect that in the inner recesses of his mind Johnson was torn between a search for an honorable exit and his desire not to be the first President to lose a foreign war. During the remainder of his Presidency, he sent conflicting signals and possibly lost the opportunity, which I believe lay within his grasp, to end the war before he left office—and on terms that would have been better than those President Richard Nixon agreed to in 1973.

Johnson's speech was ambiguous. On the one hand, none of its policy announcements were entirely new; limited bombing halts had been tried before, and there was nothing peacelike about a call-up of some Reserves. On the other hand, the tone and the rhetoric of the speech, especially coupled with his withdrawal from the 1968 race, were significantly more moderate than the tone and the rhetoric of any other recent Presidential speech or statement. Rusk, Bunker, Rostow, and the military felt that we had gone as far as we needed to go in order to shore up domestic support for the war, and they did not wish to show any additional enthusiasm for negotiations, for fear that we would weaken the Saigon government. I was among those who wanted the speech to mark the beginning of an intense search for a settlement of the war.

The day after the speech, American planes bombed targets near Thanh Hoa, an important transfer point just



south of the 20th Parallel. This bombing fell within the guidelines established by the President—that we would bomb only in the area where North Vietnamese combat forces might threaten our troops in the South—but just barely: the Thanh Hoa targets lay two hundred and five miles north of the Demilitarized Zone separating the two Vietnams. Consequently, there was an immediate uproar from people who felt that the President had misled them into thinking the bombing would be restricted to a small area just north of the DMZ. Senator J. William Fulbright, of Arkansas, led the attack. Even though I had told Fulbright the day before the speech that we would continue bombing up to the 20th Parallel, he angrily charged on April 1st that in the light of Thanh Hoa the speech constituted at best "a very limited change in existing policy." Other members of Congress and a number of commentators joined in the attack.

On April 2nd, the President and his senior advisers met to discuss the problem. Johnson lashed out furiously at Fulbright and other members of Congress "who start attacking us even before the Communists do." But, trapped by the uproar caused by the ambiguous wording of his speech, he decided to restrict the bombing still further, to the area south of the 19th Parallel instead of the 20th, in order to bring policy back into line with rhetoric.

On the morning of April 3rd, the debate over the President's speech was swept aside by a stunning event, which no one in Washington had expected: a message from North Vietnam, broadcast over Radio Hanoi. It began with a lengthy denunciation of the United States, but contained this sentence:

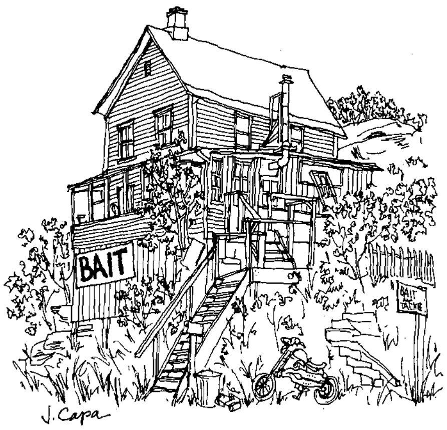
> However, for its part, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam declares its readiness to appoint its representatives to contact the United States representatives with a view to determining with the American side the unconditional cessation of bombing raids and all other acts of war against the D.R.V. so that talks may start.

Hanoi's statement did not mention the President's March 31st speech. Furthermore, it explicitly restricted any discussions with the United States to the subject of our "unconditional" cessation of the bombing of the rest of North Vietnam. It did not constitute an agreement to talk about ending the war. Nonetheless, it was the first time Hanoi had offered to meet with us on any basis at all, and for that reason alone the statement created worldwide excitement.

An argument immediately broke out among the President's senior advisers over how to answer Hanoi. Harriman wanted to respond immediately, so as to avoid "the public appearance of hesitancy." Rostow suggested that we "improve the pace of the negotiations by military means"—that is, increase the level of American military activity—but the President rejected this idea out of hand. "It's easier to satisfy Ho Chi Minh than Bill Fulbright," the President noted bitterly. Ambivalent and wary, he warned against letting the public get its hopes up too high. But he wanted to respond during the same news cycle, so that the evening television-news programs would carry not only Hanoi's offer but Washington's response. He asked Katzenbach and me to draft a statement that could be issued immediately.

Shortly after 5 P.M., the President walked into the West Lobby of the White House and read a short statement we had drafted reiterating the Administration's readiness "to send its representatives to any forum, at any time" to discuss ending the war. Less than seventy-two hours had elapsed since the President made his speech from the Oval Office.

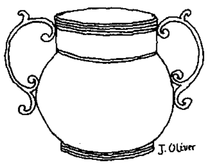
Why had Hanoi sent its April 3rd message? At first, I assumed that it was a direct response to the President's speech, but later I concluded that it probably wasn't. Students of Hanoi's negotiating style pointed out that it would have been unusual for the North Vietnamese, with their methodical and collegial decision-making structure, to respond so quickly. It was more likely that they had already decided to make a move on their own. There was some evidence that that was the case. Some may argue that if Hanoi had in fact intended to make an announcement the President's March 31st decisions were unnecessary. I do not agree. The importance of the March 31st speech was not its effect on Hanoi but its effect on the United States: it marked the end of the era of escalation, and the first step, however ambiguous, toward deëscalation and disengagement.



IN his speech, the President had announced that if North Vietnam began talks with us our negotiators would be Averell Harriman and the American Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Llewellyn Thompson, who was a Soviet expert and was very close to Rusk. After Harriman argued on April 3rd for further deëscalatory steps in Vietnam, the President became concerned that he might be excessively conciliatory. When Rusk said that, in the light of our efforts to get arms-control discussions with the Soviets started, Thompson could not be spared from his Moscow post, the President decided to send Cyrus Vance, his favorite trouble-shooter, to Paris as Harriman's co-negotiator. So great were Vance's personal skills that he was able to maintain the trust of both Harriman and Johnson during the remainder of the year, even though those two men disagreed on almost every aspect of the negotiations.

On April 4th, the day we began preparations for the talks, a great national tragedy occurred—the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. I had never met Dr. King, but I respected enormously what he had accomplished and what he stood for, both in the civil-rights movement and in his early and strong opposition to the war. His death was an indescribable loss to the nation, and within hours it set off riots, followed by arson and looting, in Washington and more than a hundred other cities across the country. Before the riots ended, forty-six people, mostly black, had been killed and more than twenty-five hundred injured. For a moment, even Vietnam seemed to fade into the background. The riots required a federal response; before they died down, more than seventy-five thousand National Guardsmen and regular troops were sent into the streets of American cities. The Pentagon was heavily involved in every aspect of these events, and I found myself shuttling between meetings on Vietnam and emergency sessions on the urban riots in America.

Only two months after the Communist uprising at Tet, it seemed we were experiencing our own national uprising. As I drove from my house to the Pentagon the morning after Dr. King's death, I could see the smoke rising from the inner city, only ten blocks from the White House. Later that morning, less than eighteen hours after Dr. King's death, I joined the President in a sombre but emotional meeting with some of the nation's black leaders, including Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young, Jr., and Washington's mayor, Walter Washington. During the meeting, President Johnson told them he would press for immediate passage of the long-stalled open-housing bill as a tribute to Dr. King. The bill did pass both houses of Congress within a week, but it was overshadowed by the fire burning across the land.



President Johnson had planned to fly to Honolulu during the first week of April to consult with General William C. Westmoreland, who was in his final weeks as commander of American forces in Vietnam but was to become Army Chief of Staff in early July. The President cancelled this trip as soon as Dr. King was killed, and asked Westmoreland to fly to Washington instead. When the General arrived, on April 6th, he presented a glowing picture of confidence. "In the negotiations," Westmoreland said, stressing every word, "Governor Harriman will have a hand with four aces and the enemy will have two deuces."

"Under what conditions would a ceasefire be acceptable?" I asked.

Westmoreland's reply alarmed me; it showed how entrenched and unrealistic he was. "I do not see any acceptable ceasefire," he said. "We would just like the North Vietnamese to go home and turn in their weapons."

The mood in Washington following the riots was ugly, and finally, on the evening of Monday, April 8th, the pressure drove President Johnson to Camp David for a respite. The next day, Rusk, General Earle (Bus) Wheeler, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and I flew there with Ellsworth Bunker, who had just arrived from Saigon; at luncheon, we were joined by William Bundy, the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, and Averell Harriman.

Tall, thin, and quiet-spoken, Ellsworth Bunker was courteous and gentle at all times, no matter what the circumstances. A member of that group of Easterners who had dominated America's postwar foreign policy, Bunker had attended Yale before the First World War, at the same time as Harriman and former Secretary of State Dean Acheson. In 1951, after a thirty-five-year career in business, he had been sent by Acheson to Argentina as Ambassador. He then became a skilled professional diplomat, eventually serving under every President from Truman through Carter.

At seventy-three, Bunker was our oldest serving Ambassador, older than anyone in the Cabinet, and, among those advising the President on Vietnam, was younger only than Harriman (by three years). Yet he was holding down a job far more demanding than most Cabinet posts. He worked very hard, but at his age, especially in the debilitating tropical climate of Southeast Asia, he had to choose his priorities carefully. Furthermore, he had come to Saigon with little background for such an assignment, and was dependent on the Embassy political section for insight into the situation in Vietnam. In the absence of deep knowledge of either Vietnam or guerrilla warfare, he fell back on a simple position: if the flag is being shot at, we must rally behind our country. As 1968 wore on, Bunker often played the pivotal swing role in the three-ring circus consisting of Washington, the Saigon government, and the negotiators in Paris—almost always, in my opinion, to the detriment of progress toward peace.

His style, and Rusk's unswerving support of him, made it extremely difficult to argue directly with Bunker, especially in front of the President. In my limited previous contact with Bunker, I had always held him in the same high regard that so many other people did. Even when we disagreed, I still liked him, and regarded him as a great patriot. But during the April 9th meeting I realized that Bunker and I were never going to be on the same wavelength as far as Vietnam was concerned, and that his views would be a serious problem to those people seeking to end the war.

Bunker told the President that the pacification program had been badly

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hurt by the Tet offensive, although not as much as the American press had reported. Like Westmoreland, he felt that the press had badly misreported the outcome of the battle. "In fact, we go into the negotiations from a position of strength," he said. He went on to say that South Vietnam's President Nguyen Van Thieu was expecting another enemy offensive between May and October—an accurate prediction, as it turned out, of the offensive that took place in May. In a less accurate assessment, Bunker was upbeat about Thieu, who he said was now "acting like a leader." Finally, to my dismay, Bunker declared that we should move as slowly as possible in the negotiations. "Saigon is not at all ready," he said.

Supporting Bunker, Rusk said that Hanoi's objective was clearly to end the bombing of the North. He predicted that the first phase of the talks would be very tough. "We are going to have to hang in there," he said. "We either have to get them to make concessions or make it clear that they are responsible for any breaking off of the talks."

"Would they have made their feelers if we had not made our speech?" the President asked. "The quickness with which they responded . . . indicates they might have had in mind doing something, but probably not what has resulted. What happens if they are just fooling around with us?"

I was ready for this question. "In that case, Bus Wheeler and I will have some choice targets in the North ready for you," I replied. But what I thought was: I will do everything possible to avoid having to make *that* recommendation.

There was another problem: we had not agreed on a negotiating site. On April 4th, the President had proposed that talks begin in Geneva on April 8th. At almost exactly the same time, Hanoi sent a message proposing that contacts begin at the ambassadorial level in Phnom Penh. Because we had no Embassy or representation in Cambodia, this proposal confronted us with the first dilemma of the new era of "dialogue" between Washington and Hanoi. Public pressure was beginning to build for the President to fulfill his pledge to go to "any forum, at any time" to meet with the representatives of Hanoi.

IN considering ways to move our policy in Vietnam, I had already concluded that press conferences and congressional testimony were generally more productive than formal speeches. That had been true during my confirmation hearings, when I advanced our negotiating position during the discussion of the San Antonio formula—the proposal made by President Johnson in San Antonio on September 29, 1967, in which he offered to stop bombing North Vietnam if its leaders would then begin "productive discussions" with the United States. I hoped to repeat the pattern occasionally in subsequent press conferences. Phil G. Goulding, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, who was responsible for preparing my press guidance, later wrote an accurate description of my method:

> Not once did [Clifford] oppose the President publicly. Not once did he suggest error in a past presidential decision. Not once did he undercut a move the President was making or contemplating. And on every occasion possible he presented the President as the man in the world who had given more of himself to the quest for peace than any other. . . . Clark Clifford consistently and skilfully moved in public to occupy the ground the President had not yet reached.

A Cabinet member must not contradict the President or undercut him in any way, but Cabinet members should clear a path ahead of the President on delicate policy issues, testing public reaction. I was always ready to pull back or retract a statement if the President told me to. He never did. While our previously warm relationship took on a wary and guarded tone, the President never criticized any position of mine directly.

All during March, I had avoided a formal press conference, but after March 31st Phil Goulding felt it essential that I discuss the military aspects of the President's speech with the press. The President agreed that I should do so, and Goulding scheduled a meeting with the press for April 11th at 10 A.M.

Judith Shahn

The Eight-thirty Group—a group of advisers I talked with every morning—met for several hours before the press conference, reviewing press guidance. (The core group consisted of Paul Nitze; Paul Warnke; Phil Goulding; George Elsey, with whom I had worked in the Truman White House; and my military aide, Air Force Colonel Robert E. Pursley.) My press conference would allow me to focus on a critical issue: Would we send any more troops to Vietnam after the small increment, of thirteen thousand five hundred, that had been announced by the President on March 31st?

In a background session on April 1st with a few Pentagon reporters, I had mentioned a "limitation" on deployments to Vietnam. Although the President had not used similar language in public, I felt that my statement was consistent with his private views, as he had stated them on the evening of March 31st and thereafter. There had been no reaction from the White House after my backgrounder. I decided to repeat my point in public, using language that would not preclude the President's ability or right to send more troops at a later date. I also decided to stress our intention of shifting the burden of the war back to the South Vietnamese.

I began the press conference by disclosing that a previously announced call-up of Reserves would total twenty-four thousand five hundred, of whom ten thousand would go directly to Vietnam. The first question concerned this deployment. In reply, I made two references to a troop ceiling, and linked it to an increased combat role for the South Vietnamese:

> I might add also in that regard that when these additional forces go, the total . . . in South Vietnam will be brought up to some 549,500, and it is the President's intention at this time not to increase those forces. . . . I would visualize that when the South Vietnamese troops were ready, that they could be moved into areas where the combat was taking place so that they could supplant some of the American troops [who] might be drawn back in reserve. . . . This is part and parcel, I believe, of the President's decision to place a limitation at this time upon our troop level at a point not exceeding 550,000.

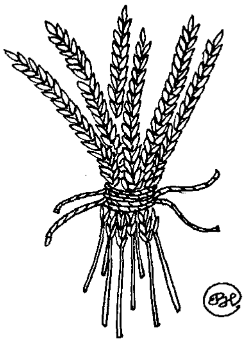
I had carefully qualified my statement with the phrase "at this time," using it twice. The press ignored the three words of qualification, not to my displeasure. The *Times'* three-column headline captured my three objectives almost perfectly, announcing, "U.S. CALLS 24,500 RESERVES; SETS G.I. CEILING AT 549,500, GIVING SAIGON MAJOR ROLE." The Washington *Post*, in an editorial, called the announcement that we were shifting the burden back to the South Vietnamese a "monumental" decision. For the most part, the press reported my comments much as I had hoped.

After my press conference, the overactive Washington grapevine was filled with rumors that the President had not been pleased by my statements, but I ignored the gossip; I knew that if the President wished me to change my behavior he would inform me. I repeated my comments on a troop ceiling on April 22nd, June 20th, and August 15th, dropping the qualifying phrase "at this time" after the second press conference. The President never objected.

The number of American soldiers in Vietnam never did exceed the ceiling I had announced. Through repetition and lack of contradiction, my interpretation of the President's policy became the policy itself. Perhaps because he wished to maintain the support of the military, President Johnson never made a similar statement himself, but it stood as policy, and was eventually confirmed by the White House.

The April 11th press conference surprised many people in Washington who had been unaware of my position during the battle over the President's March 31st speech. Two weeks later, under the headline "CLIFFORD EMERGES AS THE PRESIDENT'S CHIEF SPOKESMAN ON VIETNAM; HIS MODERATE VIEWS COME AS SURPRISE TO CAPITAL," Neil Sheehan, of the *Times*, wrote, "Mr. Clifford, to the surprise of Washington, has spoken of Vietnam in terms of disengagement, accommodation, and a negotiated peace. [He] has emerged as a new voice with a different approach."

Inside our air-conditioned and sheltered offices, Administration officials prepared for the negotiations with North Vietnam. But we could not ignore the upheaval taking place outside—the sense of social and political crisis. On April 23rd, a student uprising at Columbia University, in New York, began a new cycle of militant dissent on the campuses of America, and in time it spread overseas, to France and other parts of Europe. Meanwhile, the dance over the site of the peace talks went on for close to a month. Fifteen cities were eventually mentioned in the discussion. But we deliberately kept one obvious choice, Paris, a city with which the Vietnamese were very familiar from their days as a French colony, off the list, hoping that if we did not suggest it the Vietnamese eventually would. Finally, at 1 A.M. on May 3rd, after a month of sterile exchanges, they offered to meet us in Paris a week later. The next morning, after middle-of-the-night telephone discussions with Rusk, Rostow, and me, President Johnson went before the television cameras to announce the agreement.



As soon as a date and a site had been selected, I felt an unmistakable hardening of the position of Rusk and Rostow on the negotiations themselves. On May 6th, I remarked to my colleagues in the Eight-thirty Group that I feared that those closest to the President were turning against any compromise with Hanoi. Late that day, I attended a frustrating meeting at the White House with Rusk and our chief negotiators. Neither the President nor Rusk seemed to want to address pressing issues. "Suppose Hanoi says it wants an agreement on stopping the bombing and will discuss nothing else until that is done," I said. "This is a real issue. Let's face that very real possibility." Rusk, however, immediately shifted the discussion to other matters—a mutual withdrawal of forces, amnesty, the history of our earlier negotiating positions. I felt that these issues, while important, were not going to be discussed in Paris until the bombing question was settled.

The next day, May 7th, the same group met again. Rusk urged an uncompromising opening position, saying that we should press for more than "the Clifford formula," using the phrase to try to distinguish my views from the San Antonio formula. Rusk wanted to tell Hanoi that the bombing would stop if, and only if, we knew in advance that North Vietnamese infiltration into the South would cease. That would constitute a significant retreat from the San Antonio formula as I had explained it publicly in January, and I objected strongly. Rusk was not simply being stubborn. Behind this and many other disagreements between us lay a fundamental question: What was our objective in Vietnam? Rusk believed firmly in taking a strong initial line in any negotiations with Communists, and holding to it indefinitely. He had spent many hours over many years across the table from tough adversaries like Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, holding to his position as the Soviets held to theirs. He had many examples, drawn from his experiences since the end of the Second World War, of the perfidy and dishonesty of Communist negotiators everywhere from Korea to Berlin.

As a general principle, I agreed with Rusk's view of Communist negotiating techniques and ethics; indeed, as I sometimes pointed out, I had produced one of the earliest government documents describing those techniques—a top-secret report, "American Relations with the Soviet Union," which I wrote in 1946 with George Elsey, who was now with me in the Pentagon. But Rusk and I differed profoundly over how Vietnam fitted into this pattern and what our goal should be in the limited time left to the Johnson Administration. I had concluded that our objective should be to extricate our country from Vietnam before the end of the year; Rusk did not agree. To him the talks in Paris were another chapter in the long twilight struggle with Communism throughout the world. He was unwilling to consider even as a possibility what I viewed as a fact—that the war was not an integral part of that worldwide struggle, and that our obsession with Vietnam was weakening us elsewhere in the world.

In our disputes, which grew in frequency and intensity during the summer, Rusk and I never raised our voices and never attacked each other personally. We maintained a proper, if cool, personal relationship. But our substantive and stylistic differences were considerable. They went back as far as the nineteen-forties, when we had diverged over the question of American support for and recognition of a Jewish state in Palestine. Rusk thought that politics played too large a role in the positions I took on issues; I felt that domestic politics were a legitimate and

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Rusk was so determined to prevent any premature movement in Paris that he instructed the negotiating team not to prepare, or even discuss, fallback positions, and not to look for possible areas of compromise with Hanoi, even as contingencies. He told Harriman and Vance to stick to their opening positions until they were instructed differently. Harriman, who had negotiated with Trotsky and every other Soviet leader except Lenin, was outraged at what he regarded as the excessive specificity and rigidity of these instructions. "When I went to Moscow in 1942, Roosevelt simply instructed me to accompany Churchill and explain our position to Stalin," he told me angrily. "I had no further guidance. I didn't need any then, and I don't need any now."

On May 8th, the President, Rusk, and I met with Harriman one last time, to go over his instructions. Whatever lay ahead, the bureaucratic battles of the previous weeks had at least produced a reasonable compromise on our opening position. Harriman and Vance were given four negotiating objectives: first, "prompt and serious substantive talks looking toward peace in Vietnam, in the course of which an understanding may be reached on a cessation of bombing in the North under circumstances which would not be militarily disadvantageous"; second, the creation of some control mechanism to oversee any peace or ceasefire; third, the reëstablishment of the Demilitarized Zone between North Vietnam and South Vietnam as a genuine boundary; and, fourth, the full involvement of the government in Saigon in any talks on the future of South Vietnam.

At the May 8th meeting, another battle broke out between Rusk and me over the bombing. Rusk wanted to resume air strikes between the 19th and 20th Parallels. I opposed this, on the ground that it was wrong to escalate our military activity on the eve of the Paris talks. The President agreed with me, but the issue was hardly dead. On May 14th, Rostow and Wheeler joined Rusk in raising it at the Tuesday Lunch—the President's regular weekly meeting with key advisers—and I stood my ground, arguing again that it made no sense to increase the bombing just as the talks in Paris were beginning. Again, the President rejected Rusk's proposal. He was upset, however, that such a strong argument had broken out between his two top Cabinet members so soon after his withdrawal from the 1968 election. Deeply disturbed, he made an astonishing remark: "Sometimes I wonder if I should have made my speech on March 31st at all."

That day, the White House notetaker, Tom Johnson, recorded an exchange that showed how tense relations between Rusk and me had become:

> SECRETARY CLIFFORD: I appear on Friday before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. They will want to get into sensitive areas.
>
> SECRETARY RUSK: I would memorize the March 31st speech and not go beyond it.
>
> SECRETARY CLIFFORD: [You mean] I cannot go into the San Antonio formula?
>
> SECRETARY RUSK: I would say to them what I have said to newsmen: "I [see] no point in my negotiating with you. We are trying to negotiate with Hanoi in Paris."

The mood in this meeting depressed me profoundly. On Saturday, May 18th, I closeted myself for the morning with Warnke, Elsey, and Colonel Pursley. Cautioning them that not a word of what we were about to discuss could leave the room, I expressed my deepest feelings to them. George Elsey, who made a record of my comments, later called it Clifford's soliloquy:

> One reason why we have got our way [so far] on not resuming the bombing between the 19th and the 20th Parallels was that I was prepared. Bus Wheeler said to me after the meeting was over, "I should have gone to law school instead of West Point." The next issue will be more basic: what is the future of our war in Vietnam? We'll soon get to the ultimate policy decision. Rusk, Rostow, and Wheeler are taking a very hard position, saying we must stay until we succeed militarily. The problem is, this appeals to the President's "nail the coonskin on the wall" mentality. It bothers him to have to side with me when three are against him. We are approaching the time when we will have to talk these things out like they have never been discussed before.... I must be prepared for such a meeting with a logical, airtight presentation....
>
> If the President thinks he must stick to the search for a military victory, then there is no end to this war.... We have made more headway toward peace in the last three months than in the entire previous year. I think we can say that we made it around second base on March 31.... But at the last Tuesday Lunch, the President worried about whether or not he should have even made that speech!... I want to impress upon the President that our posture is basically so impossible that we have got to find some way out.... We should come up with a memo that makes the case for a disengagement on our part as a matter

> of transcendent importance for this country. I know that the President is not going to be willing to settle the war by taking a terrible licking.

A few days later, Warnke and Pursley responded to my request with a long and tightly reasoned memorandum. They pointed out that the absence of the "popular uprising" in the South which had been predicted by the Communists marked a significant failure of Hanoi's plans. They also noted that the Communists were paying a fearful price for their efforts but that this was overshadowed by an assessment from the Central Intelligence Agency that Hanoi would be willing to pay the price far longer than the American public would be willing to pay the cost of exacting it. Warnke and Pursley drew particular attention to the C.I.A.'s judgment that Hanoi could receive sufficient military and economic assistance even if we mined the major harbors of North Vietnam, including the main port of Haiphong.

The Warnke-Pursley memorandum argued that we could achieve our objectives without seeking a clear-cut military victory:

> We should . . . be able substantially to contract our activities and still make it clear to the enemy that they are bound to lose. This is the best posture from which to negotiate an acceptable settlement or, if this proves unattainable, to buy for South Vietnam the time necessary for its government and armed forces to take over their own defense.

This valuable memorandum, which I kept on my desk for the rest of the summer, made great sense to me, but I knew that at such a late date in the Administration we lacked both the internal unity and the political will to adopt such a strategy. When I turned the Pentagon over to my successor, Melvin Laird, in January, 1969, Warnke and Pursley gave him an updated version of their memorandum, and he used it to help develop the policy of Vietnamization—having the South Vietnamese bear more of the burden of the war. (Wisely, Laird retained Pursley as his military assistant, and asked Warnke to stay on for a transition period.)

The Tuesday Lunch on May 21st was grim. Rusk raised the question of a resumption in bombing up to the 20th Parallel. I continued to argue strongly against the expansion of the bombing. "If we escalate again, it will diminish the chance of success in Paris, and it would be catastrophic if Paris broke up and we had to go back to a pure military policy," I said.

"Why is that so bad?" the President asked.

"It's bad," I replied slowly, "because we will lose more boys than ever before, and because I don't think we can win the war by military means."

The President seemed annoyed by my words. "What do you mean?" he asked.

This was neither the ideal time nor the ideal place to open a discussion of such basic questions, but I no longer had any choice: the dispute with Rusk over the bombing had forced me into areas I had originally planned to discuss with Johnson in private. I had to reveal the depths of my doubts to the President in front of three powerful opponents—Rusk, Rostow, and Wheeler:

> With the limitations now placed on our military—no invasion of the North, no mining of the harbors, no invasion of the sanctuaries—we have no real plans or chance to win the war. Our hopes must go with Paris. . . . In the fall of 1967, the North Vietnamese decided that their earlier plans were no good. They put in their stack; that was Tet. They didn't win. But they can still control the situation in the South: they can hit and run; they can attack the cities; they can control the level of casualties. Now they may have concluded it is a good time to have a political settlement. They can't win the war militarily. But we can't win the war militarily.

"I disagree," President Johnson said. He turned to General Wheeler for a comment.

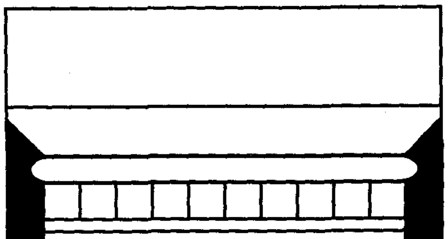
Quietly, Wheeler said, "I disagree to some extent."

Rusk, showing greater emotion than I had ever seen from him before, turned toward me. "We have sought to keep North Vietnam from overtaking South Vietnam by force. We have succeeded in that."

Determined not to yield, I replied:

> Hanoi cannot win the war militarily. They know that. But that doesn't mean we have won it. If Paris does not come off, we will be back where we were before. They are not running out of manpower. They can continue at their present rate indefinitely. The Soviets and the Chinese will continue to help them. . . . Can anybody here tell me what our plan is if the Paris talks fail? If Paris fails, we have no alternative but to turn back to the military—and they have no plan to bring it to an end.

After listening wearily to the argument between Rusk and me, the President, referring to an expansion of the bombing, said, "I will put it off again,



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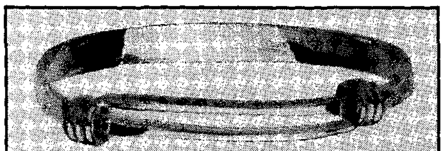

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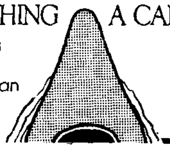

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against my better judgment." Looking directly at me, he added grimly, "You're just carrying me along week-to-week on this one."

Nothing was happening in Paris, and in Vietnam the Communists had launched a second wave of attacks, quickly dubbed "the mini-Tet offensive." American casualties had risen to an all-time high during the second week in May—five hundred and sixty-two killed, more than two thousand wounded. The pressure to bomb north of the 19th Parallel increased once again. Some of my colleagues, including Rusk, felt that in these circumstances the Paris talks were hurting us. I believed that the opposite was true. Even if we made no progress, we still gained more than the North Vietnamese did from the talks as long as we continued to take a more reasonable position than they took. Their continued insistence that there were no North Vietnamese troops in the South, for example, only made them look ridiculous in the eyes of the world. Furthermore, I believed that the concentrated air campaign aimed at interdicting supplies from the North was more effective than our previous bombing program of scattered major targets in the North. "I believe that something important will come out of Paris if we keep the talks going until after the end of the Democratic Convention," I told Rusk in a meeting at his office on May 24th. "I am convinced that something will happen if we maintain the talks until then."

I suggested that we call Vance back from Paris to get his views. He returned to Washington on May 27th, and for the next three days he stayed at the White House and sat in on every meeting. Vance was extremely negative about any expansion of the bombing. With his calm, methodical, unemotional style, he had an enormous effect on the discussions, visibly cooling down the hawks around the table. For the first time in almost two months, I had an influential ally. After the first day of meetings, I half jokingly told him he should come home much more often, because "it makes it so much less lonely for me here."

In private, I explained to Vance why I opposed with such vigor the relatively small step of bombing between the 19th and 20th Parallels. Those supporting it, I said, would push for continued reëscalation if they got this first step. Vance, backed by a cable from Harriman, succeeded in persuading Johnson to postpone any decision to move the bombing north to the 20th Parallel again. But the issue was far from resolved in the President's mind.

AND then, in an era of tragedies, another one enveloped the nation. On the evening of June 4th, Robert F. Kennedy was shot, in Los Angeles, just after he had won the California Presidential primary. He died on June 6th. Once again, we were plunged into a period of national shock and grief. In personal terms, his death ended one of the most complicated relationships of my life. How could fate, circumstance, and history have bound me so closely to the elder brother and left me in a situation of such strain with the younger, when the two brothers had been so close themselves? *I thought back to my* last meeting with Bobby, which led to his fateful decision to run for President. I remembered the many occasions when John F. Kennedy had called me to the White House to argue some legal issue with the Attorney General. I thought back to an unsuccessful effort I had made in 1960, at John Kennedy's request, to persuade their father that Bobby should not become Attorney General. In retrospect, I could see that while I still felt that my grounds for opposing the appointment had been entirely correct, Bobby had done an outstanding job in the Justice Department, assembling the finest team of lawyers I ever saw there. Bobby's friends, many of whom were also close friends of mine, had told me of his extraordinary growth as a human being in the last few years of his life, but I had not had occasion to witness it. Now history had closed its books on this remarkable man.

Lyndon Johnson's feelings about Bobby's death were complex. Now history would always trap him between the two martyred Kennedys. He had truly felt grief for the family of Jack Kennedy in 1963, and always treated Jacqueline Kennedy with great courtesy. But this was not true with regard to Robert Kennedy's family.

At President Johnson's request, I went to the White House at about

6:30 P.M. on June 5th and stayed with him for the rest of the evening. At first, he did not wish to go on television to discuss the shooting in Los Angeles; perhaps, he said, a statement issued in his name would be sufficient. Without exception, every adviser in the room urged him to speak for himself; we pointed out that he had spoken after the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., and that not to do so now would seem small-minded. He had to set aside his own feelings and speak against the forces of hatred and prejudice that had cost us another great national figure. Finally, we persuaded him and settled down to produce an appropriate statement, which he read to the nation at 10:07 P.M.

Early the next morning, I received a telephone call from the President that began one of the saddest experiences in my long association with Lyndon Johnson. He wanted to discuss whether or not Robert Kennedy had the right to be buried in Arlington Cemetery. I was stunned. Not only was I unaware of the exact regulations determining who was permitted burial in the increasingly crowded space of our most important national burial ground but I was dumbfounded that the President was concerned with such an issue. The regulations were irrelevant and, in any case, could be suspended by the Commander-in-Chief. It seemed obvious that Robert F. Kennedy should be buried near his beloved brother on the gentle slope below the Custis-Lee Mansion. The politician in Lyndon Johnson understood this, but his bitterness continued even after Bobby's death.

Robert Kennedy was buried at Arlington on June 8th. I attended the moving ceremony and wondered again how our nation would survive what was clearly the most serious challenge it had faced since the Civil War. We were increasingly divided along a fault line defined partly, but not entirely, by Vietnam. The fault line ran between those mourning Bobby Kennedy and those supporting the right-wing, racist candidacy of Alabama Governor George Wallace; those demonstrating against the war and those calling for more bombing of North Vietnam; those asking for funds for the poor or a legislated end to discrimination and those who felt threatened by change. Perhaps Bobby Kennedy had been the last Democrat who could have united the factions of the Party, which was itself beginning to unravel, but now we would never know.

ON June 5th, only a few hours after Robert Kennedy was shot, the President received a private message from the Soviet Premier, Aleksei Kosygin, urging the United States to stop all bombing of North Vietnam. There was nothing unusual in this sentiment; the Soviets had expressed it publicly many times. What drew our attention was the opening of his message. "My colleagues and I believe, and have grounds to believe," it went, that a halt in the United States bombing would lead to a breakthrough and produce "prospects" for peace.

Harriman and Vance were excited, certain that the Soviet Union, which was giving Hanoi vast amounts of aid, could help settle the war. I favored a positive gesture by the United States that would put Moscow on the spot to produce results. Two months had now passed since the President's speech, during which there had been no movement in Paris, and many deaths on the battlefield. On June 9th and again on June 11th, I proposed that we take action—in Vietnam perhaps a lowering of the level of the bombing of the North—based *directly* on the Soviet message, and that we make clear to both Moscow and Hanoi that if there was no corresponding action by the North Vietnamese our action would be terminated. Rusk and Rostow, on the other hand, viewed the message as virtually meaningless unless it was backed up by a specific explanation of what Hanoi would do to reciprocate; they wanted an explicit understanding in advance—not only from Moscow but also from Hanoi—on what would happen if we stopped the bombing.

The President, again caught between his top advisers, wavered. Exasperated at my persistence, he called my recommendation "fantastically unrealistic." Finally, he sent a noncommittal message to Premier Kosygin asking what would happen if we stopped the bombing. Instead of making a low-cost test of the prospects for peace, we began a sterile exchange of telegrams with Moscow. Kosygin's message had not received a true test, I told the Eight-thirty Group in disgust, and we might never know if it had meant something or not.

Although for the most part the dissension within the Administration was

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unknown to the public—and was heatedly denied whenever it became the subject of speculation in the press—it was now a well-established fact. Distrust reached such a high level that the original message from Kosygin to Johnson was withheld from me for almost a full day. At the end of a meeting at the State Department on June 7th, I remarked on this to Rusk. He apologized and promised that it would not happen again. Just afterward, Harry McPherson, the President's special counsel and chief speechwriter, who was my closest supporter in the White House, asked me to join him for a discussion with Benjamin H. Read, the executive secretary of the State Department, in Read's small, glass-enclosed office, which was exactly halfway between the offices of Rusk and Katzenbach. I was uncertain about how frank I could be about my views in Read's presence, and just before we entered Read's office I pulled McPherson aside and, waving a hand in Read's direction, asked, "Is he one of us?" Harry assured me that Read was "on our side." For the rest of the year, the phrase "one of us" became a touchstone that Harry and I used in discussing our colleagues.

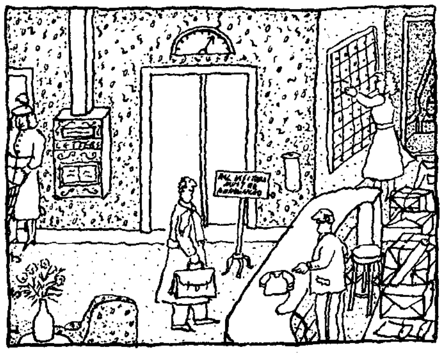
Later in June, Rostow told Read, who controlled the distribution of many of the most sensitive telegrams within the government, not to distribute to the Pentagon any of the private telegrams from the Paris negotiating team. Read, one of the most highly respected officials in the government, was close to Dean Rusk, but he was also firmly committed to the search for a way out of the war. Read told Rusk about Rostow's instructions, observing that the Secretary of Defense could not do his job properly if he did not receive the telegrams from the negotiating team. Rusk, who believed deeply that government should function according to certain rules of rational and civilized behavior, agreed, and Read, without telling Rostow, set up a private messenger service, through Colonel Pursley, to keep me fully informed of events in Paris.

Having lost the fight over the reply to Kosygin, I was in a gloomy mood when I met with the Eight-thirty Group on June 11th. "I am constantly isolated in these meetings at the White House," I observed.

"Your goal is to get out of Vietnam," Elsey replied, "but Rostow and company still seek our original objective of 'a free, independent, and viable South Vietnam.' "

As June stretched on, I sensed a change in the President's mood. He was more irritable than he had been in months, and spoke in a low, depressed, muffled voice. He seemed to disagree with everyone. When I commented on the President's strange disposition to Leonard Marks, a close friend of the President, who was the director of the United States Information Agency, Marks offered a simple explanation: "He knows he is presiding over a disintegrating operation." I felt as if a clock were ticking ever more loudly, counting down the days in which the Administration could still try to end the war. I was dismayed that the President—having ended his political career, as he had said, in order to devote himself to the pursuit of peace—continued instead to pursue a military victory. With a sinking heart, I realized that the military had half persuaded the President that the war was going so well that he should stiffen his terms for a settlement.

Early on the evening of June 26th, Cy Vance slipped out through a side door of the American Embassy in Paris, got into an unmarked sedan, and travelled by a circuitous route to a C.I.A. safe house in a Paris suburb for a secret meeting with the second-ranking North Vietnamese representative in Paris, Ha Van Lau. After an intense argument within the Administration, Vance had been instructed to tell the North Vietnamese that we would stop the bombing on three conditions: first, if it led to "prompt and productive" talks involving the Saigon government; second, if the sanctity of the Demilitarized Zone was respected; and, third, if the Communists agreed to refrain from rocket attacks on the major South Vietnamese cities. The North Vietnamese rejected this proposal almost immediately, stating that they would never accept any conditions regarding the cessation of bombing. Nonetheless, we had opened a serious secret channel of discussion with Hanoi.



On the evening of June 29th, I had a long talk with Walt Rostow about our differences, at dinner at my house, in Bethesda. For three hours, we discussed them in a cordial manner. But I could not persuade him to take a more positive view of the negotiating process, and, needless to say, he was equally unsuccessful in moving me away from my views of it.

I HAD not visited the war zone since becoming Secretary of Defense. The summer months had seen a significant diminution in the level of fighting in South Vietnam, as the Communists regrouped after suffering heavy losses in the two offensives earlier in the year. Most intelligence analysts concluded that the lull foreshadowed another offensive, in late July or August, designed to make an impact on the American election campaign. In mid-June, the President asked me to go to Vietnam in order to make my own assessment of the situation, and then fly to Honolulu to join him for a summit conference, with President Thieu, which was scheduled for late July.

On Sunday, July 14th, I flew into Saigon, which had been turned into a gigantic armed camp, and was surrounded by a ring of allied troops on full alert in anticipation of the predicted enemy offensive. American B-52s were flying missions against Communist strongholds northwest and southwest of Saigon as I arrived, and the next day a brigade of the United States 9th Division engaged in a fierce firefight with North Vietnamese troops near the provincial capital of Phu Vinh. My visits in the field once again showed me the courage and dedication of the American troops. But, even as I praised them in public, I thought how wasteful it was that they were still at such risk, when with a different policy we could already be looking toward their withdrawal. In a press conference in Da Nang, I predicted enemy attacks in the next few months designed "to make an impression on the conferees in Paris." Mindful of the difficulties that other Americans, including Westmoreland and former Defense Secre-

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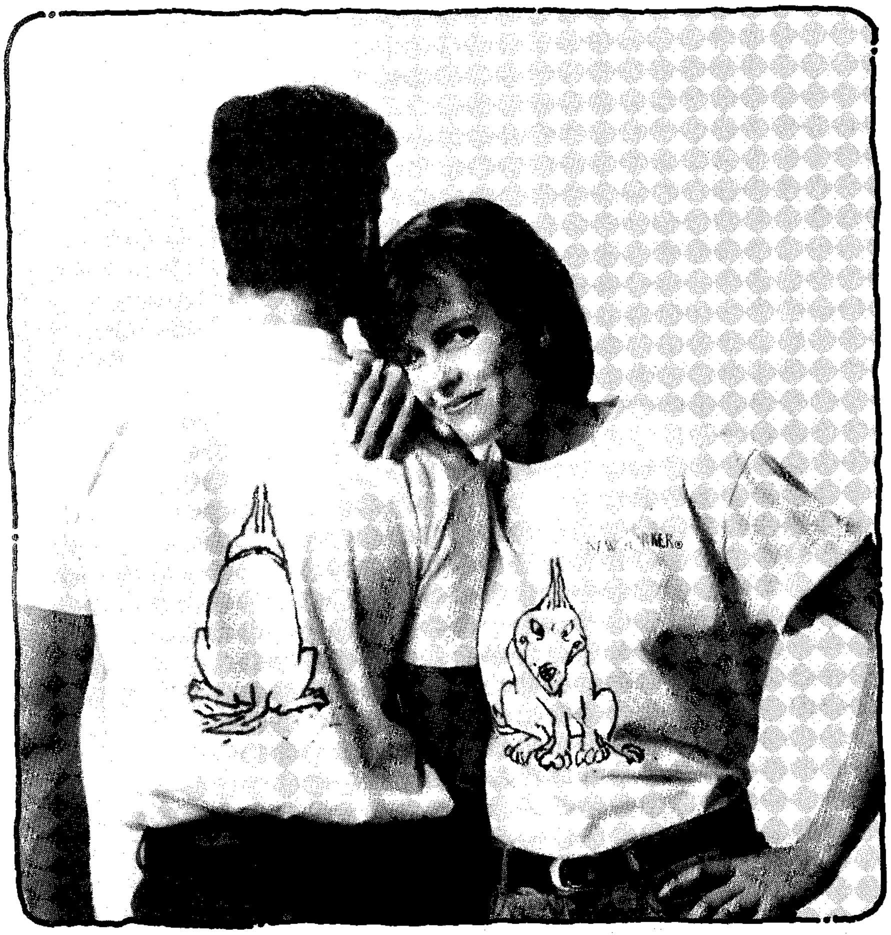

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tary Robert S. McNamara, had got into by predicting American withdrawals, I refused to offer a date when our forces might start to move out, but I stressed at every opportunity the growing ability of the South Vietnamese Army to assume more responsibility for the fighting, and frequently quoted President Thieu, who had said that Americans could start to go home in 1969.

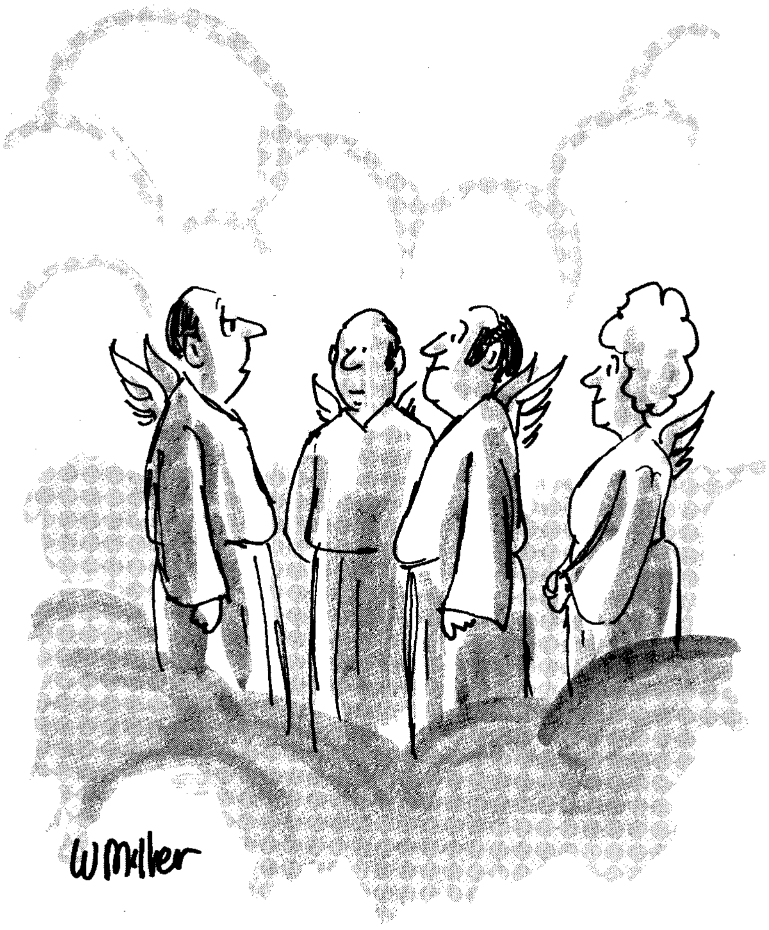
The highlights, if that is the right word, of my trip to Vietnam were two meetings I held in Saigon—one with President Thieu and Vice-President Nguyen Cao Ky, the other with Ambassador Bunker. Both were no-holds-barred sessions. The first convinced me that the leadership in Saigon did not really want any settlement with Hanoi; the second confirmed my worst fears concerning the attitude and the role of the American Embassy. I met with Thieu and Ky at the Presidential Palace, which was ringed with South Vietnamese Rangers. After listening to a long presentation by the two Vietnamese, I began a frank discussion of the American commitment to the war. Flanked by Bunker and the American military commander in Vietnam, General Creighton Abrams, and by Wheeler, Bill Bundy, and Pursley, I told the Vietnamese leaders that in the absence of visible progress the American public would simply not support the war effort much longer. If we could not achieve a settlement in Paris, we expected the South Vietnamese gradually to take over the war. Bunker was shocked at my bluntness, but I was concerned that our gentle and dignified Ambassador had not made Thieu and Ky sufficiently aware of the degree of impatience and frustration felt by both the President and the American public. As the outsider from Washington, I could speak more frankly than a resident Ambassador, and I was not trying to win a Saigon popularity contest. Saigon's weakness was the major cause of our dilemma, and I saw no reason to indulge it. Bunker may have discovered "statesmanlike" qualities in Nguyen Van Thieu, who was clearly his favorite among the South Vietnamese leaders, and he believed that there was growing stability in the government, but I saw a group of squabbling and corrupt generals selfishly maneuvering for their own advantage while American and Vietnamese soldiers died in combat.

My meeting with Bunker was unexpectedly emotional. We were joined by Deputy Ambassador Samuel Berger and Bill Bundy. I told the two Ambassadors that we would be derelict in our duty if we failed to make use of the six months left in the Johnson Administration to seek an honorable end to the war. Bunker and Berger were startled by my vehemence, and unalterably opposed to my suggestions. Bunker considered it heresy to suggest that Saigon should bend a little to help get negotiations started. I expressed my concern that Saigon appeared to oppose any agreement with Hanoi.

When we left Saigon for Hawaii, on July 18th, I was depressed. Except for Nick Katzenbach in Washington and Averell Harriman and Cy Vance in Paris, I was an isolated voice among the senior people in the Administration. Yet the trip to Saigon had convinced me, more strongly than ever, that the war was drifting along, out of control. I sent the President a message asking for a private meeting with him, Rusk, and Rostow as soon as I got to Honolulu. But when we arrived Bunker found Rusk immediately and warned him of the tone I was going to take with the President.

I made three points to the President, Rusk, and Rostow. First, I was more certain than ever that we could not win the war within the restrictions that existed on our military activities—and, for the reasons we had discussed often in Washington, we could not remove those restrictions. I added that General Wheeler had told me privately that he agreed with this view, though he would not say so in front of his fellow Chiefs of Staff.

My second point shocked the President and visibly disturbed and offended Rusk. I was now "absolutely certain," I said, that the South Vietnamese government did not want the war to end—not while it was protected by half a million American troops and a "golden flow of money." While I wanted to strengthen the South Vietnamese Army, I was startled by the "shocking and outrageous list" its leaders had given us of equipment they wanted: it included from three to four hundred helicopters, T-39 trainer jets to be used as private aircraft for senior officials, and so on. Thieu and Ky clearly feared the loss of American support the moment the war ended. The entire Vietnamese-American relationship was riddled with corruption. The senior civilian in the Vietnamese government, Prime Minister Tran Van Huong, had told me



"Help you look for Elvis? Sorry, I'm a Louis Armstrong fan myself."

that corruption was the "national cancer."

Finally, I urged the President to inform the Vietnamese that we were going to make an all-out effort to settle the war in the next six months. I suggested that we explain to Thieu that the next President, whether Nixon or Humphrey, would have a strong national mandate to end the war and Thieu would have less bargaining power and less influence in Washington than he had now. I pointed out that every candidate of both parties, with the exception of George Wallace, was making statements that suggested movement away from support of the war.

Rostow said nothing after I finished. Rusk said he disagreed with all three of my points, and repeated his familiar arguments. I could see that President Johnson was uncomfortable about such a fundamental rift between his top two Cabinet officers, this time only a few hours before he was scheduled to meet with the President of South Vietnam.

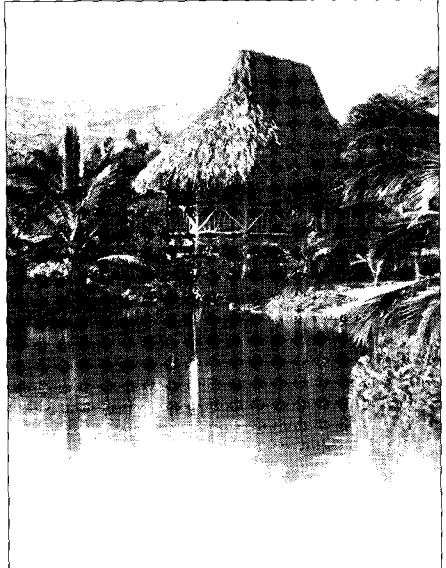
The two Presidents began their summit with a forty-five-minute private meeting. That was followed by a larger meeting, consisting of nearly worthless briefings by officials from both nations. I listened with little interest, wondering what had gone on in the private meeting between Johnson and Thieu. After the larger meeting ended, President Johnson pulled me aside as we were preparing for lunch and told me that he had been impressed by my three points and had raised all of them with Thieu. "Thieu agrees with your first point," he said. "On your second point, Thieu says of course he wants to win, but the United States can't leave until the South Vietnamese government is ready for our departure. On your third point, I got an agreement with Thieu that he will start private talks with Hanoi."

I was gratified that my three points had been discussed, but, as I told the Eight-thirty Group on July 22nd, Thieu had not given up much of anything. His "agreement" on the first point really meant that he wanted to expand the war into Cambodia and to bomb North Vietnam harder. His response to my second point in effect confirmed my apprehension that Saigon would not be an active participant in the search for peace as long as the South Vietnamese thought they had a blank check from Washington. As for the third point, Hanoi had steadfastly refused to hold any talks with Saigon, and I assumed, as did the intelligence community, that this would continue to be the case until the bombing of the North ended.

Thieu's response to my last point foreshadowed problems in October. We had given Saigon our word that we would not participate in serious talks on the future of South Vietnam without Saigon's representatives' sitting at our side as full participants. I believed that this was the correct position to take; the very survival of our Saigon ally was at stake. In Honolulu, however, Thieu sought a further commitment from the United States: that we would not stop the bombing until all North Vietnamese troops had been withdrawn from the South. Such a commitment would have constituted a major hardening of our position. In Honolulu, though, the Paris talks seemed far away, and no one wanted to have a confrontation with Thieu over what appeared to be a theoretical point. We chose to treat his efforts more as a propaganda ploy than as an indication of serious trouble to come. We should have taken Thieu's views more seriously, and recognized that (as I had tried to tell the President and Rusk) he and Ky were opposed to any settlement at this time. But, given the President's refusal to resolve our internal conflict, it was impossible to formulate, even as a contingency, a coördinated position on dealing with Saigon. In the delicate balance within the Administration over this question, the decisive vote went to the man on the ground in Saigon, Ellsworth Bunker.

All factors considered, the Honolulu summit was a misguided venture. It set back our negotiating efforts in Paris without advancing our military objectives in Vietnam. The big winner was Nguyen Van Thieu. Although he failed to obtain his maximum objective—the loosening of restrictions—his rigid positions, which were supported by Bunker, resulted in a stiffening of the American position. We had gained nothing in return—not even a general acceptance of the need for greater flexibility in Paris.

ON August 28th, the Democratic National Convention, in Chicago, nominated Hubert Humphrey for President. Since his dramatic entrance on the national stage, in 1948, Hum-



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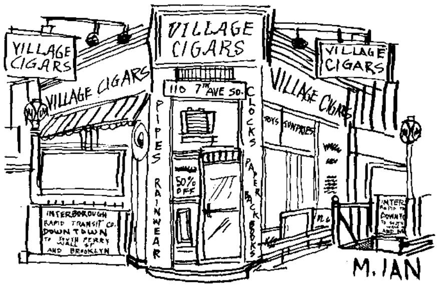
phrey had been one of the leading spokesmen for liberalism, but as Vice-President he had loyally supported a policy on Vietnam that he had played no role in creating. Now he was trapped between his natural constituency and the man to whom he owed his job. That he came so close to victory in November despite all the difficulties he faced was a tribute to both his personal popularity and his innate decency. Humphrey and I saw little of each other during the campaign. He told me later that he had kept his distance out of respect for the difficult position I would have been placed in if I had spent much time advising him on Vietnam. But during the summer I heard that he was considering a limited declaration of independence from the Administration on the war. It was inevitable that this information would reach the President, and equally inevitable that he would react furiously. In some of our meetings, he branded Humphrey as weak and "disloyal." More important, the news stiffened the President's position against concessions to Hanoi and made him determined to obtain the backing of the Democratic Convention for his policy.

Johnson's anger at Humphrey led him toward his old adversary Richard Nixon. "I want to sit down with Mr. Nixon to see what kind of world he really wants," the President told Rusk, Rostow, and me on July 24th. "When he gets the nomination, he may prove to be more responsible [than the Democrats]. He says he is for our position in Vietnam. . . . The G.O.P. may be of more help to us than the Democrats in our last few months." On August 10th, the two men met, at the LBJ Ranch. Thus began a secret relationship between Johnson and Nixon, which hurt Humphrey's campaign greatly. Nixon skillfully promoted an image of himself as more sympathetic to the President's position in Vietnam than Humphrey was. After the August 10th meeting, the President told me that Nixon had said that as long as the Administration did not "soften" its position he would not criticize us. I was as appalled as the President was pleased. "This is good news for Nixon," I told the Eight-thirty Group on August 12th, and I added:

> If I were Nixon, the one development that would worry me would be an announcement that the bombing was being stopped in response to indications that real progress was being made in Paris. . . . It helps Nixon for him to support the President, because he's making the President all the more inflexible, and thereby freezing poor Hubert out in the cold. Humphrey wants to change the policy, but the President won't let him, and every effort by Humphrey to do so will earn him the President's animosity. I think the President has been so anxious to take a hard and inflexible line that he thinks he actually achieved an advantage by getting Nixon to go along with him. In fact, Nixon has outmaneuvered the President again, digging him in more deeply. Nixon is trying to hang the war so tightly around the Democrats' neck that it can't be loosened.

So damaging was the situation to Humphrey that I couldn't help thinking the unthinkable aloud to my colleagues: at some inner level of his psyche, Lyndon Johnson seemed ambivalent about whom he preferred as his successor. George Elsey told me about a conversation with Charles Murphy, a White House special assistant working on the 1968 campaign, that appeared to confirm our worst fears. Murphy had told Elsey of a recent conversation in which President Johnson said that if Humphrey did not stand firm on Vietnam a Nixon victory "would be better for the country." As Johnson wrote later in a revealing passage in his memoirs, he considered Nixon "a much-maligned and misunderstood man . . . a tough, unyielding partisan and a shrewd politician, but always a man trying to do the best for his country as he saw it."

The next two weeks were a nightmare for the Vice-President as he searched for a position that would satisfy both the liberals and the President. Humphrey and his advisers actually achieved this seemingly impossible feat, with a carefully worded draft platform plank on Vietnam that was accepted by Dean Rusk and Walt Rostow, on the one hand, and by the moderate liberals, on the other. But on the eve of the Convention, in a fateful telephone call, the President told Humphrey he could not accept the compromise plank. In a critical decision, Humphrey acceded to the demands of his President and supported a plank unacceptable to the liberals, thus insuring that there would be an up-or-down vote on the platform.



In order to bolster the Administration position prior to the vote, the White House took an action on August 22nd to which I objected strongly, because it pulled the military into partisan politics. At the President's direction, Rostow sent General Abrams a back-channel message asking a series of questions about the value of the bombing of the North. Rostow's message went only to Abrams; it was clearly intended to bypass General Wheeler and Admiral Ulysses Grant Sharp, commander of the joint services in the Pacific, C.I.A. Director Richard Helms, Dean Rusk, Ellsworth Bunker, and me. Abrams, who did not know that this was a request for material that might be used in the battle over the Vietnam plank of the Democratic platform, sent his reply to three of his military colleagues and Ambassador Bunker and me. Just minutes after Abrams' answer reached the White House, Rostow, realizing that the channel had been blown, sent Rusk, Helms, Wheeler, and me the same list of questions to cover his earlier back-channel message. (The Nixon White House would learn from such mistakes, and perfected an effective communications system that bypassed the Cabinet departments.)

Predictably, Abrams' message reaffirmed the value of the bombing of the North. The White House gave carefully chosen portions of the message to Representative Hale Boggs, of Louisiana, the chairman of the platform committee, and Boggs used it with great effect to win over delegates to a hard-line policy on the bombing. I protested vigorously on two grounds: first, it was highly improper to use military commanders, whether or not they knew why they were being used, in a political campaign; and, second, the field commander should not communicate directly with the White House without the knowledge of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense.

President Johnson's victory in the platform committee was a disaster for Humphrey. At a moment when he should have been pulling the Party back together to prepare for the battle against Nixon, he had been bludgeoned into a position that had further split the Party and given more evidence of his weakness. But even worse was to come: one of the low points in the history of American politics was about to unfold

—the battle of Chicago. The scenes of police teargassing and clubbing young demonstrators as the Convention got under way drove a dagger into the heart of the Democratic Party and its candidate. I watched from Washington, feeling helpless. Even a generation later, the 1968 Convention is still haunting the Democratic Party and providing the Republicans with a potent symbol.

On the eve of the Convention, the President began to talk about going to Chicago to defend his record. Everyone knew that this was a poor idea, fraught with danger to him and to the Party, but he persisted in considering it, and even demanded that a speech be prepared for him to deliver in Chicago. On Sunday, August 25th, I was called away from an afternoon of golf to join Joseph Califano, the principal White House aide for domestic affairs, and Harry McPherson, and we worked until after midnight on a Presidential speech that none of us believed should be delivered. McPherson told me he had made a secret trip to California the previous week to help edit a film commemorating the achievements of the Administration for possible use at the Convention. We all agreed that it was tragic that Lyndon Johnson's domestic legacy was being undermined by the civil war enveloping the Democratic Party. It seemed particularly ironic to me that the President's most vocal opponents in Chicago included so many of the prime beneficiaries of the Great Society programs. In their anger at Johnson, they behaved in a manner that could only help Richard Nixon. Watching the war in the Chicago streets and the scene inside the Convention hall, I would have said that Hubert Humphrey's chances of winning the election in November were almost nil. But, then, there was always the memory of 1948.

DURING the summer, Washingtonians, stunned by the violence in Chicago, quoted William Butler Yeats' immortal poem "The Second Coming." It appeared to describe their condition:

> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world . . .
> The best lack all conviction, while the worst
> Are full of passionate intensity.

Leaders throughout the world were overwhelmed by events they could not control, and ugly new voices from the left and the right presented themselves. The war had come home to America, and the talks in Paris were stalled. On July 29th, Harriman and Vance, unaware of the change in the President's mood since the Honolulu summit, had boldly proposed that, after consultations with Saigon and our other allies, we announce that it was our intention to stop the bombing, on the assumption that the North Vietnamese would not take advantage of the halt. "If [these] assumptions are invalidated, we will resume bombing," they cabled.

The President would have none of it. He called the telegram "mush," and said it was part of a conspiracy designed to force him to stop the bombing. "The enemy is using my own people as dupes," he said bitterly. As I told the Eight-thirty Group the morning after the President's comment, it was clear that he was referring to Harriman, Vance, Katzenbach, and me.

On July 30th, the President instructed Rusk to hold a press conference knocking down any efforts to add flexibility to our position. Rusk faithfully carried out his assignment, but the next day the President upbraided him—something I had never seen before—for not taking a tougher line in his press conference. "You missed a lot of opportunities," he said, astonishing Rusk. Moments later, he criticized me for a press-conference comment I had made—that concentrating the bombing in the South had "in some respects produced more dividends" than the bombing before the limitation. I was trying, of course, to defend the policy and reduce pressure to resume bombing north of the 19th Parallel, but the President was annoyed, especially by an approving editorial in the *Times*. "Lay off that line," he said. "It's a damned lie."

Rusk was shaken by the President's mood. After the luncheon, I offered him a lift back to his office. Sitting in the back seat of the automobile, he said he was worried about the hard line the President was taking. I was even more distressed. I told the Eight-thirty Group on August 1st, "We are in danger of losing all that we have gained since March."

Perhaps the President sensed a need to restore warmer relations, or perhaps it was just a coincidence, but that same day Lady Bird called Marny and invited us to spend the weekend at the LBJ

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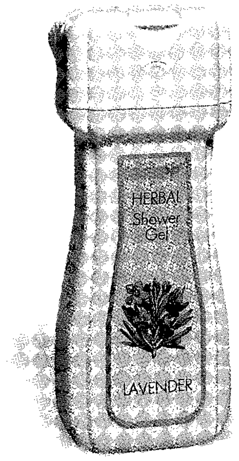

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Ranch. Determined to try to move the President, I began to formulate a bombing-halt proposal different enough from the Harriman-Vance recommendation that it might gain Presidential acceptance. On Friday, August 2nd, along with the Johnsons and the Califanos, we boarded Air Force One for the flight to Texas. The mood seemed to warm up in the forward cabin as we approached the President's beloved Texas, and as Lady Bird's sunny disposition relaxed everyone. On Saturday, the President gave us the standard tour of his ranch, driving at breakneck speed across the Texas Hill Country. I thought we were going to meet every cow the President owned. On Sunday afternoon, we finally sat down alone for a private discussion on Vietnam—our first in several months. He had left his rage behind in Washington, and seemed prepared to listen.

I argued that we had fulfilled our obligations to the South Vietnamese many times over. We had prevented their subjugation, prevented the enemy from taking over their cities, strengthened their armed forces, and provided the South Vietnamese, insofar as we could, with the tools of self-determination. But we could neither outlast the North Vietnamese nor bomb them into submission. We could not hope for the creation of a viable, stable, effective, and honest South Vietnamese government in the time that the American people would allow us. Now was the last, best time for the Administration to seek a settlement in Paris. I recommended a variation of the Harriman-Vance proposal for stopping the bombing, with ways to resume immediately if the North Vietnamese took advantage of us.

When I had finished, the President said, in a pleasant manner, "Clark, it's very interesting, but I don't agree with a word that you said." Nonetheless, he asked me to discuss my ideas with Rusk and put them down on paper.

The following week, when Vance returned to Washington to argue his case, we dined at my house. Vance complained bitterly about the effect that the Honolulu summit had had on the peace process. On August 7th, he and I went to Rusk's office to ask him to join us in a unified recommendation to the President on how to stop the bombing. But Rusk had again withdrawn into a hard shell of opposition to any movement in Paris. Disappointed at what I felt was Rusk's retreat, I said, "All you are suggesting is that we keep on fighting and killing our men indefinitely."

Rusk answered, with a calm blandness I found maddening, "You never can tell when they will break and give in."

One night in early September, I was awakened at 2:30 A.M. by a telephone call from a worried Hubert Humphrey. He had just said publicly that he would start bringing American troops home in 1969, and once again he had been reprimanded by Presidential aides for his statement. He wanted advice. The next morning, I hazily remembered telling Humphrey he was on safe ground with the President as long as he based his comments on those of President Thieu, who had said that withdrawals could begin within a year.

During a meeting on September 12th, the President questioned me sharply about Humphrey's call. I explained the circumstances of the call and sought to calm the President down.

"Look, I want the Vice-President to win," he said. Amazingly, I do not think I had heard him make this flat and simple statement until that moment. "I want the Democratic Party to win. They are better for the country. I have told the Cabinet not to let the records of their departments be distorted by the Republicans. I want the Cabinet to do whatever is appropriate to help the Vice-President. Where I help depends on where the Vice-President wants me to help." The President added, "Humphrey wants space. In his heart, he is with us, but he thinks it is politically wise to keep space." I was encouraged by the President's declaration of support for Humphrey. But the truth was almost the exact opposite: in his heart, Humphrey was against the war, but he still thought it was politically necessary to stick with the President.

On the weekend of September 14th and 15th, Marny and I were invited to Camp David, and I spent almost four hours talking to the President about Vietnam. On Saturday afternoon, I tried again to get the President interested in the plan I had first offered to him at the LBJ Ranch in early August. "You just want to stop the bombing without any concessions in return," he said to me. I tried to assure him that what I was proposing was a plan to test Hanoi's seriousness, and that we could resume the bombing if Hanoi did not respond. I also predicted that if we stopped, Hanoi would enter into negotiations that included Saigon.

On Sunday morning, while I was having a late breakfast, a three-thousand-word telegram from Harriman and Vance arrived at Camp David. They had just finished the first significant private conversation with Le Duc Tho and Xuan Thuy, the North Vietnamese negotiators. For the first time, the North Vietnamese said they were ready to begin serious discussions immediately after the bombing stopped. The telegram arrived at a fortunate moment. Even the President seemed impressed by the news of the first break in the logjam in Paris.

A few days later, I met with Averell Harriman, who had returned from Paris for the funeral of his mother-in-law. He intended to launch another assault on the President. As usual, Harriman was optimistic and tenacious. He hated the war in Vietnam, he hated Richard Nixon, and he was determined to fight for his beliefs. This magnificent old warrior, who had already lived a life filled with service to the nation, was just two months shy of his seventy-seventh birthday. He knew that the two jobs he wanted most in his career, President and Secretary of State, could not be his, but he never looked back, only forward. Harriman wanted to tell the President that we had to stop the bombing to save the nation from Nixon. I tried to prepare him for the President's mood and the response he was likely to get. "I'd quit if I thought I was just being used in Paris to hold the line until Nixon takes over," Harriman replied, with great feeling.

Harriman called immediately after his meeting with Johnson to tell me that he thought he had made an impression on the President. But in fact he had not made much of an impression. The President felt that Harriman's recommendations were compromised by his early and open commitment to the cessation of the bombing. I recognized that in the President's eyes I suffered from the same defect.

The calendar kept moving, but the negotiations didn't. On September 24th, Marny and I dined with the Johnsons. Before dinner, the President invited me for a swim, and we discussed the Soviet summit and the war for almost an hour as we paddled up and down the White House pool. After dinner with some Johnson family friends, the President and I resumed our conversation and continued it until after midnight. Seeing how tired Lady Bird looked, Marny urged her to go to bed. Always the gracious hostess, Lady Bird declined to leave her guest alone. And Lady Bird, seeing, in turn, how exhausted her husband looked, tried several times to interrupt us and get him to go to sleep. But each time she approached us he ignored her completely.

As Lady Bird tried to urge her husband to go to bed, I made my case again for stopping the bombing. If we stopped the bombing, we could fight on, if necessary, and lower the costs at home. "Why shouldn't we risk giving up five per cent of our total effort in Vietnam—the bombing—to get movement in Paris?" I asked. "I urge you to proceed on the assumption that your conditions will be met. The risk is minimal."

"Abrams says it would endanger our men," the President replied.

"No, Mr. President, that is not what Abrams says," I said. "Abrams says his men would be *additionally* endangered only if the North Vietnamese took advantage of the bombing halt. If they do that, we can start bombing again, and you will not be blamed." I concluded, somewhat emotionally, that the President should have the "honor" of settling the war, and not leave it to Nixon.

I had not mentioned Hubert Humphrey, but the President brought him into the conversation. He doubted, he said, whether "Humphrey had the ability to be President." He would respect Humphrey more, the President said, if he "showed he had some balls." Johnson would not recognize, of course, that the best way for Humphrey to show personal strength was to do exactly what the President least wanted him to do—break with the Administration over Vietnam.

The next day, Rusk and I disagreed again, at a formal meeting of the National Security Council. Rusk said that if we stopped the bombing without getting something substantial in return Saigon could unravel and Hanoi might intensify its efforts. I disagreed, stressing once again that if Hanoi acted dishonestly we could resume the bombing. "We have not only an opportunity but a responsibility to test what would happen if we stopped the bombing," I concluded.

Once again, I was joined on the barricades by my eloquent comrade-in-arms from the 1965 debate George Ball, now in the last day of his service as the American Ambassador to the United Nations—indeed, the last day of his distinguished government career. "The President has not heard my heresies in a while, but I want to associate myself fully with Clark Clifford," he said. "The risks involved in trying to get substantive discussions going with the North Vietnamese are low. . . . We are needlessly continuing the war. . . . We should test the good faith of the Vietnamese by halting the bombing for, say, two weeks."

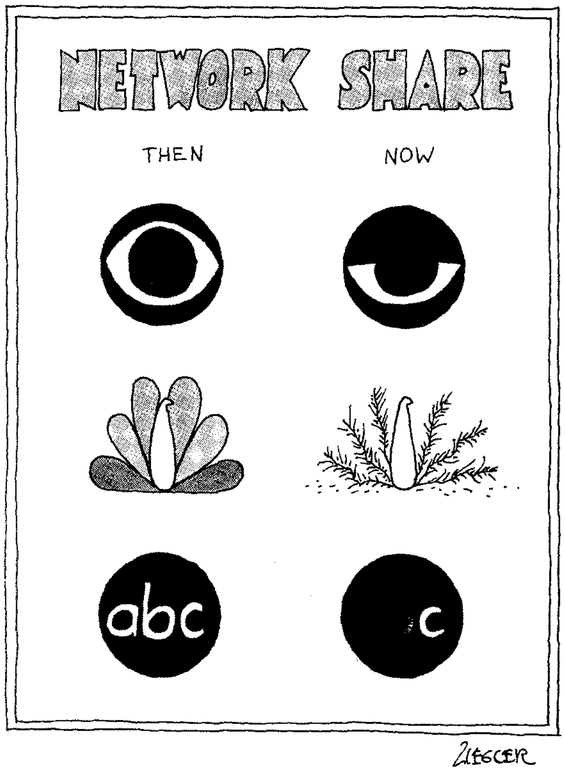
Rusk offered what I thought was an odd political judgment: "To stop the bombing with no conditions would result in many Democrats voting for Nixon."

"Mr. Nixon shouldn't enter into this question in any way," the President said sharply. "The North Vietnamese feel the same way about all of us. They are not hellbent on reaching agreement. . . . Earlier pauses didn't work. The assumptions we made proved false because the North Vietnamese took advantage of the pauses. . . . A burned child dreads fire. . . . Is it not possible to ask for an understanding? We have halted the bombing eight times without result."

The next day, Ball joined the Humphrey campaign team, in Utah. Before he flew West, he called me to promise that he would try to free Humphrey from the "psychological grip" of President Johnson and get him to lay out a policy of his own on Vietnam. Ball proposed to Humphrey a version of the same proposal that he and I had advocated in the National Security Council meeting, and, after a final late-night drama, Humphrey decided to go ahead with it.

Humphrey spoke in Salt Lake City on September 30th. Although his speech was later remembered as a decisive break with the President, it was in fact a cautious proposal, almost identical to recommendations that Ball, Harriman, Vance, and I had made unsuccessfully for weeks, and not very different from the Administration's negotiating position. But its tone was unmistakably different from Lyndon Johnson's, and it was enormously important for the political signal it sent—that Humphrey was setting out on his own for the first time.

The Salt Lake City speech marked the beginning of an impressive comeback by Humphrey. Battling a shortage of funds and overwhelming odds, he gradually closed the gap in the polls. In its final week, despite every problem Humphrey had faced, the race was almost a dead heat. Any event near the end could have swung the election either way.



IT is a truism that American Presidential elections affect people throughout the world, and that foreign governments have preferences among candidates. But no election in American history had ever seen, and probably none will ever see, as much overt involvement by foreign governments as the election of 1968. Even more astonishing, one of those governments, the Republic of Vietnam, succeeded in affecting the outcome. The *Times* col-

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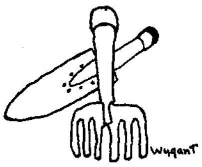
umnist William Safire, then a Nixon speechwriter, noted later, "Nixon probably would not be President were it not for Thieu." I agree with Safire: given the narrow margin of Nixon's victory—510,645 votes, or less than one per cent—it seems clear that the outcome of the 1968 election, and, with it, the shape of politics in America for the next generation, was decided by the events of October.

As that decisive month began, it was clear that it was too late to negotiate an end to the long war in Vietnam before the election. But it was not *too late to get substantive* negotiations started, and it was clear that if such talks began before November 5th they would help Humphrey.



The last four weeks of the campaign were played out against a backdrop of almost unbelievable pressure and drama in Paris, Washington, and Saigon, and, I assume, in Moscow and Hanoi as well.

The crisis of October, 1968, was complicated by the distance and the time differences between Washington, Paris, and Saigon. While one capital slept, the two others were working. Because Saigon was twelve hours and Paris five or six hours ahead of Washington, an entire day could be lost if Washington's instructions had not been sent before the end of the previous day. We held frequent late-evening meetings and drafting sessions in Washington so that our messages would reach Bunker and Harriman at the beginning of their working day. In Paris, meanwhile, Harriman and Vance worked long hours, often spending late evenings in the Embassy sending us the results of the most recent secret meeting with the North Vietnamese before catching a few hours' sleep and resuming the cycle. (Vance, unable to sleep on a soft mattress, because of a painful back problem, often made do with the carpeted floor of his office in the Embassy.) In Saigon, Ellsworth Bunker would find instructions waiting for him when he arrived at work in the morning, and after meeting with Thieu he would spend the latter part of the day sending his reports to Washington and Paris. I often slept in my office after our own sessions, although not, like Vance, on the floor.

October 11th: While I was in Bonn attending a Nuclear Planning Group meeting, the secret talks in Paris suddenly accelerated. Meeting with Harriman and Vance in a C.I.A.-supplied safe house in the Paris suburbs, the North Vietnamese envoys asked whether we would stop the bombing if they agreed to the participation of the Saigon government in the negotiations.

October 12th: Vance's counterpart at the Soviet Embassy in Paris delivered to Vance an urgent message from Moscow. Using language identical to Kosygin's June 5th letter to the President, he told Vance that if the United States stopped the bombing of North Vietnam, Hanoi would agree to the participation of the Saigon government in negotiations, which would follow immediately.

Bunker and Abrams cabled that they would support an end to the bombing of the North if there were prior understandings on the sanctity of the DMZ, no shelling of the major cities, "serious talks," and, of course, full participation by Saigon. Bunker predicted that Thieu would "find these instructions acceptable," but said that he himself "must be given time to inform" Premier Ky, Prime Minister Huong, and others.

Also on this day, unbeknownst to anyone in the Johnson Administration, Henry Kissinger secretly informed Nixon's campaign manager, John Mitchell, that he believed there was a strong probability that the Administration would stop the bombing before the election. Kissinger had met privately in Paris with Harriman, Vance, and other members of the delegation in mid-September, just before the first Harriman-Vance secret meeting with the North Vietnamese, and they had shared their frustration with him and brought him up to date on the state of the negotiations.

October 13th: The President and Rusk were so suspicious of the Soviet message to Vance that Rusk met with Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin simply to ask if the Soviet statement to Vance was fully authorized by Moscow. While Harriman and Vance waited in Paris for instructions on how to answer Hanoi, Bunker obtained, or thought he had obtained, agreement from Thieu for the American negotiating position. "Thieu concurs in instructions to be given Harriman-Vance," he cabled Washington. The next day, he sent a more detailed report, which included this passage:

> Thieu then said so long as we are going to press the offensive in the South and in Laos, and so long as we are prepared to resume the bombing if they violate the DMZ or attack the main cities, he is ready to go along. "After all," he said, "the problem is not to stop the bombing but to stop the war, and we must try this path to see if they are serious." I thought this a statesman's view.

At the time of this message, none of us in Washington had any reason to think that Thieu had not committed himself or his government to our negotiating position as flatly as Bunker had reported. But in the light of Thieu's subsequent repudiation of the Administration's position and the breakdown in communications between Thieu and Bunker it is worthwhile to reëxamine this meeting and Bunker's reporting cable. Thieu had "agreed" under extraordinary pressure: a ninety-minute meeting in which Bunker, General Abrams, and Deputy Ambassador Samuel Berger presented an oral briefing on a highly complex negotiation and requested an immediate response. The entire conversation had been in English, which, as I knew from personal experience, Thieu spoke adequately, but hardly with complete mastery. Furthermore, Asian courtesy and the hope that perhaps nothing would come of the Paris talks may have led Thieu into a polite response that Bunker interpreted as more positive than it really was. Bunker's personal comment at the end of his report revealed again his excessive regard for Thieu:

> I must confess I thought Thieu would want to think overnight about this before providing an answer, but he responded immediately and unequivocally. Most times he thinks clearly and logically. This meeting was the latest demonstration of this, and it is also the answer to those who think he is indecisive.

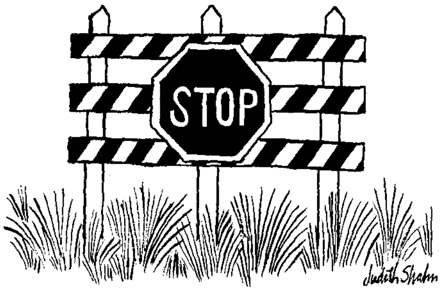
OCTOBER 14TH: Dobrynin returned to the State Department with a message from Moscow confirming that the message to Vance was authoritative. I remembered Harriman's prediction that Moscow would try to prevent a victory by Nixon, whom they still regarded as an unreconstructed Cold Warrior.

The President needed to send Harriman and Vance instructions on how to reply to Hanoi's new position. But, as in March, he wanted to meet with the Joint Chiefs of Staff before making any final decisions. He insisted that Westmoreland attend, though the General was in the hospital undergoing tests; Johnson wanted to be sure that his Army Chief of Staff supported the policy. He also invited Senator Richard Russell, of Georgia, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, to the meeting. One by one, the Joint Chiefs, including a reluctant Westmoreland, said they agreed with the new instructions to Harriman and Vance. Senator Russell at first refused to take a position. "I am here because you asked me to come," he said. "I am here only to listen. This is the most agonizing decision any President or any Secretary of State or Defense could face. Whatever you do, you will be charged with politics. But everyone wants an end to the war. It's been miserable—worse than Korea."

The President looked at Russell. "I know I will be charged with doing this to influence the election. Nixon will be disappointed. The doves will criticize us for not doing this earlier. The hawks will say I shouldn't have done it at all. I don't have much confidence in the Soviets or the North Vietnamese. I don't think they will accept this. And if they accept I don't think they will honor it. But if this doesn't work I don't think I will have another opportunity."

Finally, the President heard what he wanted. "I guess it's worth a try," Senator Russell said.

There was another meeting that evening—the third of the day. This time, only the President, Rusk, Rostow, Wheeler, and I were present, with Tom Johnson taking notes. The President pledged each of us to total secrecy, then asked each of us, rather formally, if we agreed with the instructions to move forward with the North Vietnamese. After everyone concurred, he told Rusk to send the message to Paris that would start us toward a full bombing halt and formal negotiations on ending the war. After a long day, I was exhausted and badly jet-lagged, but I believed we were finally back on the road to a bombing halt.



During the day, however, Rusk and Rostow had obtained Presidential approval for an important new condition: in order to show the world that we had got something in return for the bombing halt, Harriman and Vance were instructed to insist that negotiations involving the South Vietnamese and the Vietcong must begin within twenty-four hours after the cessation of the bombing.

OCTOBER 15TH: As we waited at the Tuesday Lunch for a report from Paris on the talks with Xuan Thuy, we went over a sixteen-point checklist of things that had to be done, both publicly and privately, in conjunction with the announcement of a full bombing halt: telephone calls to the candidates, consultations with the troop-contributing nations, congressional and press briefings, and so on. The President also mentioned a call he had received from Senator George Smathers, of Florida. Smathers said Nixon had told him that the Administration was going to try "to throw the election to Humphrey by pulling something in Paris."

During the afternoon, Bunker reported from Saigon that Thieu now wanted to delay our response to Hanoi while he conferred with his government. That seemed to be a deliberate stall, and I urged that we press Thieu hard to honor his prior commitment to Bunker. Within hours, the delay in Saigon was matched by one from Hanoi. Xuan Thuy told Vance that while the North Vietnamese would be ready to meet with us the day after the bombing stopped they could not guarantee the presence of the National Liberation Front (the political-front organization of the Vietcong) within such a short time. The "next-day requirement" by the United States amounted to a new condition, Thuy said.

At seven-thirty, I returned to the White House for another meeting, and found that the President had fallen into a dark mood over the dual setbacks in Saigon and Paris. He felt that the North Vietnamese request for more time to get the N.L.F. to Paris was deliberately evasive; whatever its composition or regional character, he and Rusk said, the N.L.F. was ultimately controlled by Hanoi. Meanwhile, Harriman and Vance recommended strongly that we proceed with the bombing halt even if we did not know when the N.L.F. representatives would show up. It was painful to disagree with my friends in Paris, but I did so, taking the position that we could not stop the bombing until we knew when the four-party talks would begin. However, I saw no reason to insist on a meeting twenty-four hours after the bombing stopped; I thought that a reasonable "date certain" for the first meeting should be sufficient, and said so to the President. He and Rusk agreed with this position, and it was relayed to Paris.

OCTOBER 17TH: Rumors that something big was about to happen in Paris began to spread through the world press. The first leak came from Prime Minister John Gorton of Australia, who had been briefed as part of our obligation to keep our allies fully informed. Artfully worded and technically accurate denials by Administration spokesmen kept the story under control, just barely, but the rumors put everyone—especially the Republicans—on full alert.

Thieu called Bunker to his office and raised a series of specific objections to the agreement we had reached with Hanoi. He said he was concerned that the N.L.F. would be treated as a "separate government" in the Paris talks, with its own flag and other attributes of sovereignty. It was clear that Thieu and the United States sought different objectives in the negotiations over a bombing halt: ours was to make sure that negotiations did not lead to increased deaths of American and South Vietnamese soldiers; Thieu's was to prevent the N.L.F. from gaining a political advantage by obtaining recognition as a separate delegation to the negotiations. But Bunker told us that these were minor problems that would be cleared up quickly, and we failed to pay them sufficient attention.

OCTOBER 21ST: In an emotional session with Bunker, Thieu stiffened his position significantly, stating that the N.L.F. should participate in the Paris talks only as part of the North Vietnamese delegation. Whatever the logic of this proposal from Saigon's point of view, Thieu had never previously suggested it, in more than five months of detailed discussions with Bunker. Thieu knew that Hanoi would never accept it, and that to introduce it now would mean a protracted delay in the start of the negotiations.

OCTOBER 22ND: At the Tuesday Lunch, I expressed my outrage. "I cannot understand what has happened in the last week," I said as the meeting began. "I thought we had an agreement. There is a missing factor here. We are facing an utter debacle."

OCTOBER 24TH: Twelve days remained in the campaign, and the latest Gallup poll showed Nixon leading Humphrey forty-four per cent to thirty-six per cent, with Wallace at fifteen per cent. From Saigon, Bunker reported that he was "making good progress getting rid of the underbrush." But once again he was overoptimistic; in fact, the underbrush was turning out to be increasingly heavy jungle.

OCTOBER 25TH: In the morning, President Johnson received a letter from Kosygin urging an early resolution of these "third-rate details which in reality have no meaning at all." The President wanted to hold an immediate meeting to discuss Kosygin's letter and the next instruction to Bunker, but, concerned that the sight of limousines converging unexpectedly on the White House would stimulate press specula-

More of a good thing.

The style and performance of the Accord. Plus the spaciousness of a wagon, a more powerful engine,

tion, he instructed Wheeler, Rusk, and me to meet in the State Department basement and drive to the White House together in an ordinary sedan.

We should have anticipated that such a request would backfire, and it did. Just as we were leaving the State Department garage, the CBS State Department correspondent, Marvin Kalb, drove his car down the ramp and saw an unlikely sight: Rusk, Wheeler, and me squeezed uncomfortably into the back seat of an old State Department Chevrolet, with a security man in the front. Kalb did what any good reporter would have done: he backed his car up, turned around, and followed us to the White House. He got a nice story out of it, and Johnson's attempt at secrecy seemed to validate the Republican charge that he was planning some kind of last-minute surprise for political purposes.

OCTOBER 26TH: Near the end of a five-hour meeting in Paris, Xuan Thuy told Harriman and Vance that if we stopped the bombing the next day the first meeting could occur on November 2nd—a six-day interval. Following instructions from Washington, Harriman and Vance replied that a three-day gap was our outside limit.

OCTOBER 27TH: It was the next-to-last Sunday before the election. Harriman and Vance met again with Xuan Thuy. After further argument over the wording of a joint announcement—an inconsequential issue, I thought—Thuy proposed that we stop the bombing on October 30th. He could not promise that the N.L.F. representatives would be ready for the meeting that would take place on November 2nd, but they agreed to meet "as early as possible." Hanoi's latest concession almost met our position, and meant that the bombing would stop on Wednesday, only three days hence, with the first plenary meeting in Paris on Saturday. Returning to the Embassy shortly before midnight Paris time, which was seven o'clock in Washington, Harriman and Vance called Ben Read at the State Department to alert him that a telegram of great importance was about to be sent. When we convened at the White House at 7:30 P.M., the President began with a simple question: "What do we do?"

"We go ahead with it," Dean Rusk said. "I smell vodka and caviar in this proposal. . . . The Soviets have moved into this negotiation." I felt encouraged that Rusk and I were on the same side.

"Why do we have to yield?" the President asked.

"If ten steps once separated us, they have taken eight and we have taken two," I replied.

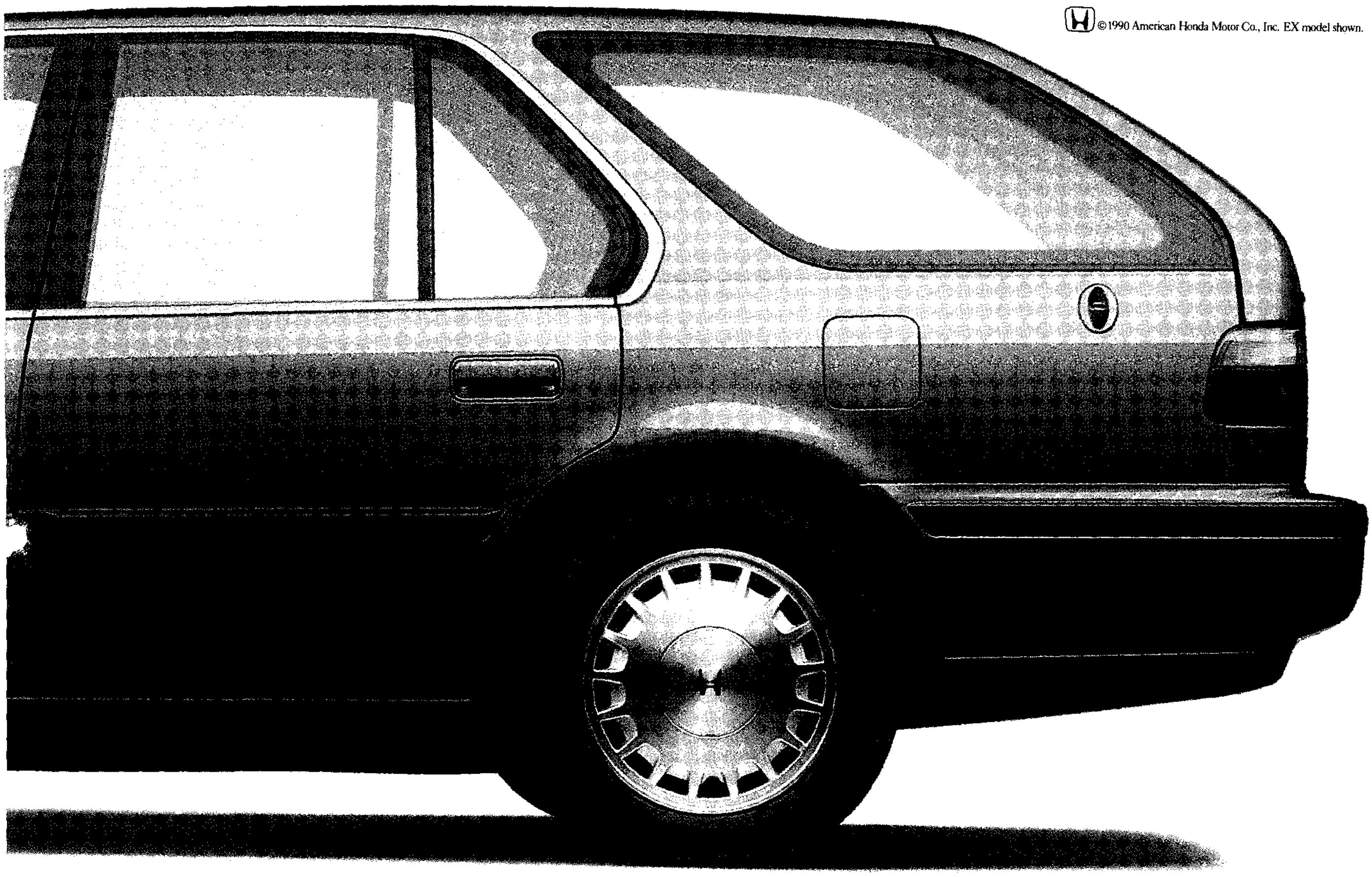
"I would say it is even nine to one in our favor," Rusk said.

A few minutes later, the President said, "I still think this is a political move to affect this election."

Before I could reply, Rusk stepped in with unusual strength. "Even if this were so, Mr. President, it is in our interests to do so."

Then, for the first time, Maxwell Taylor supported us. "I have been a hard-nosed man, Mr. President, but I am for this [even if there are] ulterior motives." He said he thought that Hanoi was ready to respect the DMZ and the cities.

The President continued to act reluctant. I could not tell if he was serious or was trying to push us to the wall in defense of our position. "I think we are being herded into this under



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iver's side airbag. Seems one good thing does lead to another. The Accord Wagon HONDA

pressure," he said. "I want Soviet assurances on the DMZ and the cities. November 2nd is a bad date, a dangerous date. Nearly everyone will interpret it as being connected to the campaign."

A chorus of voices disagreed. "You have a good story to tell," I said. "For five months, we have told Hanoi we couldn't go ahead without Saigon present. Finally, they changed their position. They chose the time—not us. We wanted substantive discussions. They capitulated." I concluded my argument in favor of a full bombing halt with one of President Truman's favorite sayings: "When in doubt, do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest."

"We may be motivated by evils we know not of," the President replied. "I would rather be viewed as stubborn and adamant than be seen as a tricky, slick politician. Everyone will think we are working toward electing Humphrey by doing this. But this is not what motivates us. I want to take it slow."

But even the military agreed that we had achieved our negotiating objectives with Hanoi. General Wheeler started to explain why the Joint Chiefs supported the deal in Paris. "The Soviets understand—"

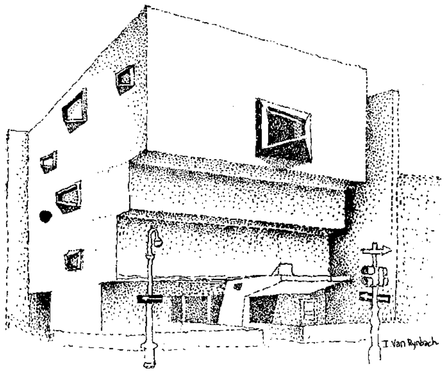
Almost shouting, the President interrupted Wheeler. "I *want* the Soviets to understand it! I *want* Harriman and Vance to understand it! And Nixon!"

Finally, he said that before he would agree to anything he needed another discussion with General Abrams. "Abrams has the color of the field commander," he said. "Russell tells me Abrams would be the most effective in selling a bombing halt. Let's get him back. All of you are playing with this like you have been living in another world, with a bunch of doves. All of you know how much I want peace, but we don't have anything to show for it."

Why did the President take such a negative position? I could only conclude that, with the election just nine days away, he was determined not to let anyone think he was acting to help Humphrey. I pointed out that at this stage of the campaign either action or inaction would benefit one candidate and hurt the other. So what if a bombing halt helped Humphrey? Continued bombing would help Nixon. The President needed to search for peace without worrying about its effect on the election. Obviously, I was not unaware of the benefits to Humphrey of a bombing halt, and I wanted Humphrey to win, but I would have taken the same position regardless of the political situation. It would be irresponsible to miss an opportunity that might be lost after the election. I could not help asking myself, again, "In his heart of hearts, does Lyndon Johnson really want Humphrey to win?" If he did, why was he making things so difficult? I had no doubt that if Johnson himself had been the candidate he would have acted differently.

AT about this time, a new and *potentially explosive factor entered* the picture: the Administration's discovery, through intelligence channels, of a plot—there is no other word for it—to help Nixon win the election by a flagrant interference in the negotiations. History is filled with characters who emerge for a moment, play a critical, sometimes even decisive, role in a historic event, and then recede into their normal lives. Such was the function of two people who played key roles in electing Richard Nixon in 1968: Bui Diem, South Vietnam's Ambassador in Washington, and Anna Chennault, the Chinese-born widow of Lieutenant General Claire Chennault, who had been the commander of the famed Flying Tigers in Burma and China during the Second World War.

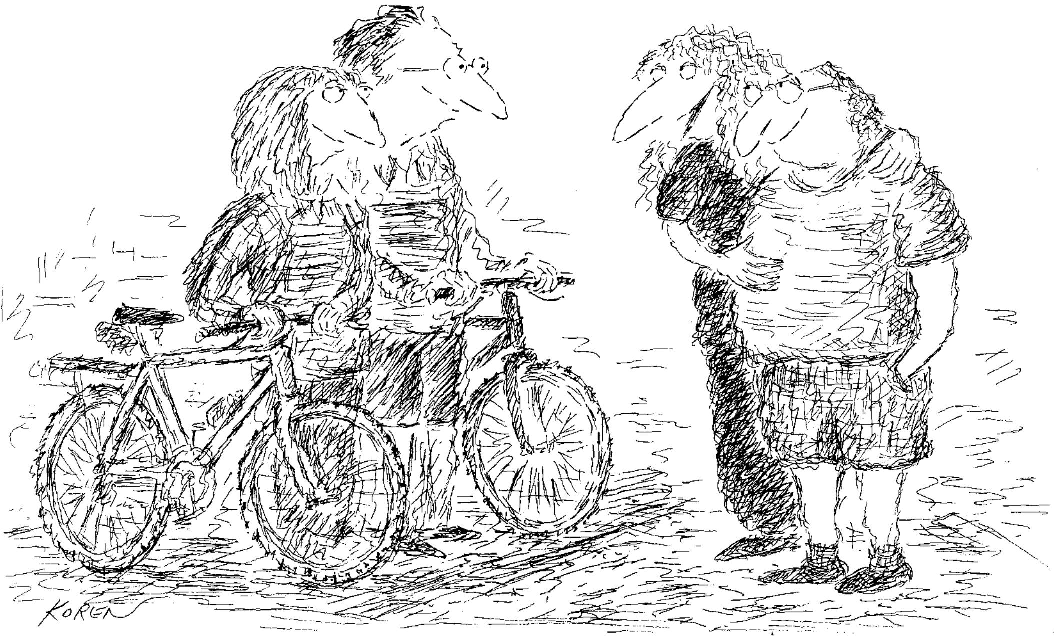
Mrs. Chennault, a small, intense, and energetic woman, was the chairwoman of Republican Women for Nixon in 1968. Early in the year, she took Bui Diem to New York to meet Nixon. When Bui Diem alerted his closest friend in the Administration, Bill Bundy, to the meeting, Bundy raised no objections; it was quite appropriate for an Ambassador to meet with a former Vice-President. But Bui Diem neglected to mention to Bundy that, at Nixon's request, he had opened a secret personal channel to John Mitchell and other senior members of the Nixon team, through Anna Chennault and John Tower, the Republican Senator from Texas.



There was almost no one in Washington as well informed as the affable and popular Bui Diem. The State Department kept him informed of the negotiations in Paris. His own government sent him reports on the Bunker-Thieu talks in Saigon. And he maintained close relations with many prominent Americans—especially Republican conservatives, such as John Tower and Everett Dirksen, of Illinois, who was the Senate Minority Leader. It was not difficult for Bui Diem to pass information to Anna Chennault, who wrote later that she had been in contact with John Mitchell "at least once a day" during the campaign. Even more important, Bui Diem could convey advice relayed by Mrs. Chennault from the Nixon camp to Thieu.

In his memoirs, Bui Diem claims that he sent only two "relevant messages" to Saigon during October. While "they constituted circumstantial evidence for anybody ready to assume the worst," he wrote, "they certainly did not mean that I had arranged a deal with the Republicans." A few of Bui Diem's messages to Saigon later became public. In the first one he called "relevant," a cable to Thieu, on October 23rd, he said, "Many Republican friends have contacted me and encouraged us to stand firm. They were alarmed by press reports to the effect that you had already softened your position." In the second, on October 27th, he cabled, "I am regularly in touch with the Nixon entourage." But, despite his disclaimers, I believe that there were other messages, delivered through other channels; Bui Diem correctly suspected that he was under surveillance by American intelligence, and surely tried to fool his watchers by using more secure channels.

Important though his messages were, Bui Diem was not Anna Chennault's only channel to Saigon. He wrote in his memoirs, "My impression was that she may have played her own game in encouraging both the South Vietnamese and the Republicans." She took seriously Nixon's request that she act as "the sole representative between the Vietnamese government and the Nixon campaign headquarters," and she certainly found other means of communicating with President Thieu.



"*Howard may have a few miles on him, but I'm not ready for a trade-in just yet.*"

• •

One was the South Vietnamese Ambassador in Taiwan, who happened to be Thieu's brother. What was conveyed to Thieu through the Chennault channels may never be fully known, but I have no doubt that she somehow sent a simple and authoritative message from the Nixon camp which was probably decisive in convincing President Thieu that he should defy President Johnson, and which thus delayed the beginning of the negotiations and prolonged the war.

The activities of the Nixon campaign team went far beyond the bounds of justifiable political combat. They constituted direct interference in the activities of the executive branch and the responsibilities of the Chief Executive—the only people with authority to negotiate on behalf of the nation. The activities of the Nixon team constituted a gross—and potentially illegal—interference in the national-security affairs of the nation by private individuals. We first became aware of these activities through the normal collection operations of the intelligence community in the weeks before the election. Gradually, we realized that President Thieu's growing resistance to the agreement in Paris was being encouraged—indeed, stimulated—by the Republicans, and especially by Anna Chennault, whom we referred to by a code name, the Little Flower. In total privacy—and, at the President's direction, without consulting Humphrey—the President, Rusk, Rostow, and I discussed what to do about this attempt to thwart the negotiations.

It was an extraordinary dilemma. On the one hand, we had positive evidence that the Little Flower and other people purporting to speak for the Republican candidate were encouraging President Thieu to delay the negotiations for political reasons. On the other hand, the information had been derived from extremely sensitive intelligence-gathering operations of the F.B.I., the C.I.A., and the National Security Agency—operations that included surveillance of the Ambassador of our fighting ally and an American citizen with strong political ties to both Republicans and Democrats. In a decision filled with consequences for the election and for history, President Johnson, although furious at Chennault, decided not to use the information or make it public in any way.

Perhaps in the wake of a decade of post-Watergate revelations about intelligence activities, the decision not to go public may seem fussy and old-fashioned. But, whether the President was right or wrong, it was an exceedingly tough call. If the decision had been mine alone to make, either I would have had a private discussion with Nixon, making it clear to him that if he did not send a countervailing signal to Thieu immediately he would face public Presidential criticism for interference in the negotiations, or I would have made some of the information public, so that the American public might take it into account in deciding how to vote.

All this raises a critical question: What did Richard Nixon know, and when did he know it? No proof—in the terminology of the Watergate era, no smoking gun—has ever turned up linking Nixon directly to the messages to Thieu. There are no self-incriminating tapes from the campaign, and the whole incident has been relegated to the status of a permanent unsolved mystery. On the other hand, this chain of events undeniably began with Bui Diem's meeting with Richard Nixon in New York, and Nixon's closest adviser, John Mitchell, ran the Chennault channel personally, with full understanding of its sensitivity.

OCTOBER 28TH-29TH: The new week began with one of the longest days of my life. While we in Washington slept, General Abrams secretly boarded a C-141 in Saigon to return to Washington, and Bunker met with Thieu to go over the agreement reached in Paris. He reported that Thieu said, "I don't see how we can ask for anything more." Kosygin weighed in again, with a strongly worded message stating that "doubts with regard to the position of the [North] Vietnamese side are without foundation."

The longest day actually began in the early evening of the day before, when we met in the Cabinet Room to discuss next steps. The President continued to withhold his final decision pending a discussion with Abrams, who was due to land at Andrews Air Force Base at 2:30 A.M. I argued that Hanoi had met every one of our original conditions and we could not keep adding new ones. Rusk agreed. "The record is as hard as it can be, short of a contract," he said. As the President adjourned the meeting, he asked us all to return to the White House later for a meeting with Abrams. I went back to the Pentagon, worked awhile, and then took a nap. At two-thirty, we reassembled at the White House. As far as I could recall, I had not been there as late as that since November 16, 1946, when I spent all night in discussions about how to respond to the nationwide coal strike. In a sense, Abrams' trip and the meeting were unnecessary melodrama. But if it succeeded in pulling the President across the line that the rest of his Administration had already crossed, it would be well worth one sleepless night and Abrams' trip home.

The President began the meeting with a long review of the negotiations since Kosygin's June 5th note. Everyone in the room except Abrams had lived through these events, and we all understood that the review was for the field commander's benefit. It served, I thought, as a sort of dress rehearsal for a public defense of our actions if we should be accused of stopping the bombing for political purposes. Finally finished, the President began interrogating Abrams, and the interrogation continued for nearly an hour. "I am going to put more weight on your judgment than that of anyone else," the President said to Abrams. We all knew that the General's answers could still derail cessation, and although Wheeler had reassured us that Abrams understood the situation, I was not entirely sure how he would respond. I listened intently to the President's questions and Abrams' replies.

"General, do you think they will violate the DMZ and the cities?"

"I think they will abide by it on the DMZ, Mr. President. On the cities, I am not so sure. I am concerned about Saigon."

"If the enemy honors our agreement, will this be an advantage militarily for us?"

"Yes, Mr. President."

"Will it compensate for lack of bombing up to the 19th Parallel?"

"Yes, sir, it will."

Again: "Do you think they will honor the DMZ?"

"Yes, sir."

"Can we return to full-scale bombing easily if they attack?"

"Yes, very easily."

"In August, we said that stopping the bombing would increase enemy capability severalfold. Why can we stop the bombing now?"

"First, our interdiction in the Panhandle [of North Vietnam] has been successful. Second, they haven't replaced their losses in the region. . . . He cannot cause the mischief he could have caused in August." Abrams' answer gave me a private sense of vindication after my long dispute with Rostow and the President over the effectiveness of the restricted bombing.

The President continued. "Can we do this without additional casualties?"

"Yes, sir, we can."

After further questions about progress in the ground war, he asked Abrams, "If you were President, would you do it?"

"I have no reservations about doing it, even though I know it is stepping into a cesspool of comment. I do think it is the right thing to do. It is the proper thing to do."

The President solemnly polled his senior advisers, one by one, although he already knew our positions. First Rusk, then me, then Wheeler, Helms, and Taylor. Everyone urged him to proceed. The President asked Rusk, McPherson, and me to draft a speech immediately.

"When do we hear from Bunker?" the President asked. Rusk replied that we were waiting for a telephone call and a "flash" message. While we met with Abrams, Bunker had been meeting with Thieu to gain his final approval. As we waited, we received an intelligence report indicating that an N.L.F. delegation had left Hanoi for Paris. At exactly 5 A.M., the President asked, "How long has Bunker been in there?" Looking at his watch, Rostow replied, "About an hour and a half." The President, looking weary, got up and started for the family quarters of the White House with General Abrams and his aides, Harry McPherson and Jim Jones. Rusk went to the State Department to await word from Saigon. Wheeler and I returned to the Pentagon, and he began preparing the orders to halt the bombing. I lay down for a nap as we awaited the report from Bunker.

Just after 6 A.M., when I had been napping for about half an hour, Rusk called the President with terrible news: Thieu had reneged on everything he had previously agreed to. We immediately reconvened in the Cabinet Room.

What had happened in Saigon? According to another of Bunker's October 29th cables, Thieu had decided that November 2nd was "too soon" for the first meeting, ignoring the fact that it was Washington and Saigon that had been insisting on the shortest possible gap between the cessation of bombing and the first meeting. Thieu said he needed to consult the South Vietnamese National Security Council again. Bunker told Thieu that there was no reason for any further delay, but he ended his cable with a comment that suggested to me that he was neither sufficiently forceful in his talk with Thieu nor fully committed to bringing Thieu around:

> We have put Thieu under such constraints of secrecy, which he has observed, that he feels he needs more time to bring them [his National Security Council] and others along. I think that they can be brought around to a joint announcement tomorrow or next day if we could offer them short postponement of the meeting date.

It was a shattering message: after a sleepless night, this unexpected disaster. The President immediately related Thieu's intransigence to the secret channel operating on Nixon's behalf. "It would rock the world if it were said that Thieu was conniving with the Republicans," he said. "Can you imagine what people would say if it were to be known that Hanoi had met all these conditions and then Nixon's conniving with them kept us from getting it?"

I was furious. "Their objection does not have merit. They can get a man to Paris in twenty-four hours. They could utilize their Ambassador in Paris. It seems to me they are playing extraordinary games. . . . It seems reprehensible and utterly without merit. We must force them to Paris."

Rusk wavered between wanting to confront Thieu and agreeing to Bunker's request for a "short" delay, but gradually moved toward Bunker's position. He did not want to have an open break with Saigon. "Let's not give the orders to stop the bombing until we get one more bounceback with Thieu out there," he said.

I was fed up with Saigon, and ready for the break. "We have two courses," I said. "One, we can wait another day to see what Thieu says. Second, we can tell Thieu that this is the plan we agreed to, and it is too late to turn back

—that it is the will of the President and the American people. I much prefer the second."

Helms, who rarely offered operational advice, came to my support. "I feel you should go ahead. . . . It is undesirable to allow these people to believe they have hijacked us out of this."

We instructed Vance to tell the North Vietnamese that we had certain "complexities" to deal with. Ha Van Lau asked Vance what these complexities were. Was it timing? If it was, Hanoi would take our problems into consideration. But Harriman and Vance, even while carrying out instructions, were up in arms. Harriman was particularly bitter and angry with Bunker. Over the secure telephone with Ben Read, he blistered his old Yale schoolmate. Looking at what might be his last days of public service, Harriman wanted to force Thieu to bend to our will. I agreed that Bunker had done a poor job. But how could we physically force Thieu to send a delegation to Paris? In truth, we had only two choices: either go it alone or allow Thieu to sink the negotiations. With this grim choice before us, I returned to the Pentagon exhausted.

There was no time for even a short nap. Within hours we met again for the regular Tuesday Lunch, and Abrams joined us. I was unrestrained in my disgust with the government in Saigon. Rusk tried to calm me down. "I am annoyed to beat hell, but it is not unusual for this sort of thing to develop," he said evenly.

Abrams shared my anger. "Thieu made a decision," he said. "It was unequivocal. He took it, understood it, marched right up to the plate and swung."

Rusk felt that we could not, or should not, make an ally act against its will. He tried to take the long view. "President Kennedy said we would make a battle there to save South Vietnam," he said. "That set us on our course. After the Tonkin Gulf incident, you put in troops to keep South Vietnam from being overrun. We have invested twenty-nine thousand men killed and invested seventy-five billion dollars. We must be careful not to flush all this down the drain."

As Rusk talked, I felt myself tuning out. This history lesson was irrelevant. I believed that if Thieu refused to honor agreements he had made with us we had to go it alone. A twenty-four-hour delay was tolerable, but there was little reason to share Bunker's belief that Thieu might come around.

In Saigon, Bunker waited through the night for another meeting with Thieu, who was still closeted with his National Security Council. I felt sure they were stalling. "It looks ominous, even sinister," I observed. "Thieu's excuse is lame—that he didn't have the time to get someone to Paris."

As the lunch ended, the President thanked Abrams for making the long and tiring flight, and suggested that he return to Saigon at once. As Abrams left, I congratulated him warmly. I thought he had performed magnificently.

During the afternoon, more bad news arrived from Bunker. Thieu had refused to see him again, but Foreign Minister Tran Chanh Thanh had said that a plenary session of Parliament would be needed to authorize the government to send a delegation to Paris. The South Vietnamese government, Thanh said, would need "materially more time" to prepare for talks in Paris. Many procedural points would have to be settled before they could agree to a date for the bombing halt and to sit down with the Communists.

Bunker's reply to this insulting message from the Foreign Minister was, to my mind, again weak and inadequate. His report concluded:

> I pressed Thanh again to say whether I should report to Washington that the GVN is not going to coöperate with Pres Johnson's request, and again he said it was only a matter of time and clarification. . . . I then said I regretted very much to conclude from our conversation that I had to report that the GVN is not prepared to coöperate with us in ending the bombing and scheduling negotiations on the basis that we had proposed.

To my amazement, Bunker then suggested that we give Thieu another twenty-four-hour delay, so that his government could "pull themselves together." I was appalled at the tone of Bunker's message. Where was the anger that should be shown when an Ambassador receives a message so insulting to his President and his nation?

At 6:30 P.M., we met at the White House for the third time that day, to consider Bunker's request. We had had almost no sleep for two days. Rusk and I had agreed before the meeting on a course of action that we would both recommend. We both said it seemed self-evident that Saigon's delays were caused by its preference for Nixon over

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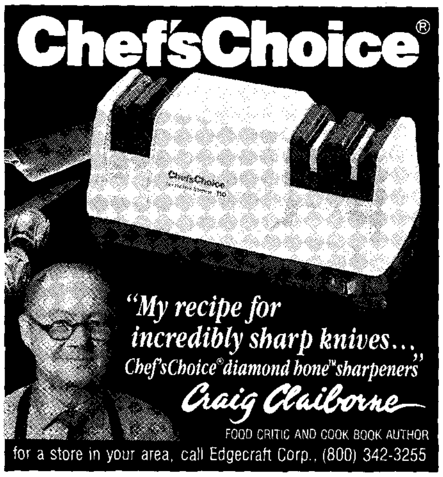
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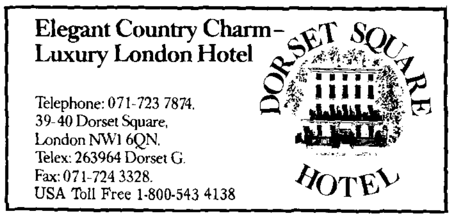
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Humphrey, and not by genuine substantive concerns. I stated my recommendation:

> Bunker should tell Thieu that either he comes with us or we go it alone. Although sometimes doing nothing is the best course, this is not such a time. I feel it is inappropriate for us, after bearing these burdens for so many years, to turn this war over to Thieu and his people and a new Administration in this manner.

President Johnson was once again uncertain how to proceed, as he said to his advisers:

> We don't want to tear ourselves to pieces over this. . . . Doing it before the election would be interpreted as political. The Nixon forces have been working on South Vietnam. We must reassess this. We can't walk out, quit, split. We have got to hold together. Sure, we must tell Saigon we won't stand for their vetoing this deal. But look at the [McGeorge] Bundy speech, the Vice-President's Salt Lake City speech, and you see the reasons for Saigon's concern. It may be better to wait until after the election. . . . I do not feel good about a quickie before the election.

After more discussion, the President said, "Let's don't go it alone. I know what forces are at work. I would be willing to agree to a postponement, for a day or two, before I broke up the alliance with South Vietnam. It is almost impossible with the people in our camp—Hubert, Bundy—making these speeches. Thieu and the others are voting for a man they see as the one who will stick with it—Nixon." He concluded, "I think we have to give Thieu some more time." He wanted to postpone the starting date of the Paris talks until November 4th, as Bunker and Rusk had suggested. He asked that a strong message be sent to Bunker to deliver to Thieu, warning him that we might go it alone if he did not join us in those talks.

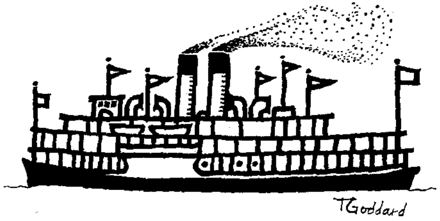
October 30th: Bunker's latest report was waiting when I arrived in the office. He had delivered the strong message, and Thieu had replied "emotionally and disjointedly." However, with the rhetoric stripped away, Thieu's answer amounted to a refusal to participate in any talks with Hanoi before Election Day. He needed a week between cessation and the first talk. He would give us a formal answer later that evening, but it seemed clear what that answer would be. Gambling on a Nixon victory, Thieu would stall.

Nonetheless, to my astonishment, Bunker still seemed to me to hold out hope that Thieu would come around. But he also recommended that if Thieu did not go along with our position in Paris we go ahead with the cessation of the bombing on October 31st but agree to a one-week delay for the first meeting in Paris. It was the first time during the entire negotiating process that Bunker had recommended a break with Saigon.

As I was reviewing this telegram and the discouraging developments of the previous twenty-four hours with the Eight-thirty Group, the telephone rang. It was the President. By custom, my staff left the room while the President and I talked. The President, bone-tired the previous evening, had awakened refreshed. I had no idea what had moved him, but he seemed to have had a significant change of heart about the negotiations. He asked me to return at once to the White House. "We have to act, with or without Saigon," he said. "Let's start all over again, and see if a different approach will give us some sort of result." I thought that there was a new determination in his voice.

The meeting started with more desultory talk about Saigon's problems. Rusk criticized Harriman's brusque manner in a recent meeting with Saigon's representative in Paris. I began to wonder what had made the President sound so decisive only an hour earlier. Finally, I burst out, in language that I had not used before in the Cabinet Room, "Saigon's whole approach is delay. This latest message is horseshit. This message is thoroughly insulting."

The President listened to the debate for another minute, and then took over the meeting. "Tell Bunker we are ready to go tonight," he said. We would stop the bombing the following day, on October 31st, he said, and schedule the first plenary meeting for Wednesday, November 6th, the day after the election. This would leave us, as he put it, "a hundred and sixty-eight hours until next Wednesday" for Bunker to persuade Saigon to send someone to Paris.



We met again in the Cabinet Room at 4 P.M. With the decision to stop the bombing finally made, we focussed, at long last, on such important details as logistics, notifying our allies, time differences, and the handling of the press. The President said he wanted to announce the complete cessation of the bombing to the nation the following day. Near the end of the meeting, he looked at me and said something that I found utterly remarkable after the incredibly difficult year we had gone through:

> There are two things that caused me to make my decision. One was the constant harassing, persuasive, and eloquent argument, of a fellow named Clifford. . . . The second thing is General [Abrams] saying here in this room what the other generals said to me—that this [bombing halt] does not hurt our men and really helps them.

Because the President was coming down with a cold and was concerned that his voice was going to get hoarse, he wanted to tape his speech a full day in advance. As the speech was taped, therefore, it did not answer the two big questions: Would the Saigon government come to the peace talks in Paris? And when would they start? The President said he would tape an ending the following day, and set the broadcast for 8 P.M.

October 31st: Would this finally be the day that we stopped the bombing? I awoke believing that it would be, hoping that it would be, but I could not forget that we had walked up this mountain several times in the last two weeks, only to be turned back each time. Feeling as if I were on a roller coaster that was out of control, I predicted to my Eight-thirty colleagues that before the day was over Bunker would ask for another delay in the bombing halt.

While we talked, Ben Read called from the State Department. "Thieu is acting very badly," he said, sounding worried. While we slept, he said, Bunker had held three separate meetings with Thieu, Ky, and Thanh to make sure they understood that we were going to proceed, with or without them. The Vietnamese N.S.C. was still in session and still objecting to our actions. Bunker, to my amazement, still thought that Thieu was "coming around," and said there was better than a fifty-fifty chance that the South Vietnamese government would go along with us. I was furious at Thieu, but not surprised.

My next call was from the President. He had just received, in response to his request, a written statement from the

Joint Chiefs of Staff that stopping the bombing "constitute[s] a perfectly acceptable military risk." President Johnson wanted a stronger statement of support from the Chiefs. "They are weaseling out," he said. I almost begged the President to forget about the Chiefs; this letter was sufficient, I said, and, in any case, it was the most that we could get in writing from the Chiefs.

At midday, I went to the White House to help draft the final portion of the President's speech. As we reviewed the draft, President Johnson, still worried that he might be making a mistake, asked me whether Hanoi's concessions were an indication that it was "defeated militarily, washed up." I said that in my opinion the enemy had been hurt but retained the capability to fight on indefinitely.

In Saigon, Bunker had completed a painful seven-hour session with Thieu, which had been punctuated by outbursts of anger by the South Vietnamese President. The two men failed to agree on a position that would satisfy both the United States and South Vietnam. The die was finally and irrevocably cast. We instructed Bunker to inform Thieu that the United States felt that it had no choice but to proceed with a unilateral announcement.

I walked to the White House theatre with the President to watch the first portion of the speech on tape. Then, his voice noticeably huskier than it had been the previous day, he recorded a new ending—an appeal for nonpartisan statesmanship in the search for peace—and three additional sentences, which were inserted in the speech tape:

> A regular session of the Paris talks is going to take place next Wednesday, November 6th, at which the representatives of the Government of South Vietnam are free to participate. We are informed by the representatives of the Hanoi Government that the representatives of the National Liberation Front will also be present. I emphasize that their attendance in no way involves recognition of the National Liberation Front in any form.

At 6 P.M., the President, his voice getting progressively hoarser, placed a conference call to the three candidates to inform them of his speech. The telephone call contained one particularly interesting comment. "Some of the old China lobbyists are going around and implying to some of the embassies and some others that they might get a better deal out of somebody that was not involved in this," the

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President said. "Now that's made it difficult and it's held up things a bit, and I know that none of you candidates are aware of it or responsible for it."

Nixon wrote in his memoirs that he was not surprised at the news, because he had been kept informed through "a highly unusual channel"—Henry Kissinger, who "continued to have entrée into the [Johnson] administration's foreign policy inner circles." He also said that his real reaction to Johnson's decision to stop the bombing was "anger and frustration." But Nixon, ignoring the veiled allusion to the Chennault channel, told Johnson he would support the decision completely.

FOR CHÉRI

Here are all these women getting all unthinking
into costume, backstage at the theatre—*tes soeurs*—

under duress in feathers.
Now we disguise our eyes—no, our

desire—again! Shadow as aquamarine and gold as
painted boats in a harbor,

underwater. Sea-green paint aslant, or—
daring—coral.

Wool dressing gowns, of course—for air
at the stage door. Aren't there always three reasons?

One is a master. One a game. Then one boy, in an
alleyway. Sit down now and eat on the iron stairs,

finish in agitation. Now come inside,
get ready. Now let the baize door slam.

Soon we will act
like girls again.

—Elizabeth Macklin

• •

November 1st: I told the members of the Eight-thirty Group that I could never have made it through the fall without their support and advice. As we met, we were interrupted by a series of telephone calls. The President wanted to read me the public reaction to the speech; the telegrams the White House had received were more or less evenly split. The President returned to a new-old subject: a summit with Kosygin. He still dreamed of visiting the Soviet Union after the election, and, at his request, I asked Warnke to draft a memorandum on why we should start nuclear-arms-control talks before he left office. But another ominous note from Saigon intruded on our hopes and dreams. Thieu had announced a major speech to Parliament, and had refused to see Bunker before he delivered it.

November 2nd: On the last weekend before the election, Humphrey nearly closed the gap with Nixon: most polls showed that the race was approaching a dead heat, and both the Louis Harris and the Gallup polls showed Nixon with only a small lead. In Saigon, Thieu played the best card he had left to help Nixon: he announced that he would not send anyone to the November 6th talks in Paris. It was a devastating blow to the Administration and to the Humphrey candidacy. Bunker, who had misread Thieu at every step, was powerless to stop him. So was the entire Johnson Administration.

Sunday, November 3rd: In growing fury, Johnson had told Senator Dirksen that he knew all about Anna Chennault's activities. Dirksen, the man who probably came closest to being a true friend of both Johnson and Nixon (and who also knew Chennault well), had immediately alerted Nixon to Johnson's fury, warning that Johnson might make the Chennault activities public. Nixon called the President, who was at the LBJ Ranch awaiting the arrival of the Humphreys. (Ironically, just hours later, the Johnsons and the Humphreys made their only joint appearance of the campaign, in the Houston Astrodome.) Always sensitive to Johnson's moods, Nixon realized the danger to his floundering campaign if he could not placate the President. Anna Chennault and Bui Diem, at John Mitchell's suggestion, had convinced Thieu that he should boycott the November 6th meeting in Paris; Nixon now had to persuade President Johnson that he had had nothing to do with those activities. The conversation between Nixon and Johnson achieved Nixon's objective: President Johnson once again decided not to go public. But the damage had been done.

November 4th: Gallup's final poll showed Nixon with a narrow lead. Harris showed Humphrey ahead by a point. In both polls, the candidates were separated by less than the margin of error. Both men had scheduled telethons that evening. Thieu continued to hold Bunker off. I waited.

The President made a conference call to Rusk, Rostow, and me from the LBJ Ranch. His mail was running against the bombing halt, and he blamed Thieu's behavior. He wanted me to ask the American military commanders in Vietnam to defend him publicly; I told him that this was not possible on the day before the election.

November 5th: Election Day at last. I spent the day in the Pentagon, lunching with Nitze and Westmoreland, meeting with Air Force Secretary Harold Brown, and carrying out routine business. I was disgusted with the campaign—with Thieu's treachery, with Humphrey's vacillation, with Johnson's failure to give Humphrey enough support, with Nixon's deviousness, with Chennault's interference. I assumed that Nixon would win, but still hoped otherwise.

The day dragged on without shape or focus. We went about our work almost numb from the combination of fatigue and suspense. In the evening, I went home to await the results with a few friends. I remembered our narrow victories in 1948 and 1960. But this time the narrow victory went to Richard Nixon. With it came the beginning of a generation of Republican dominance of the executive branch, and the end of the Democratic tradition that had begun with Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 and run for thirty-six years.

NOW that the election was over, President Johnson revived his dream of a summit meeting with

Kosygin. At first, I took the position that the discussion on arms control should start at a lower level, and any summit should await the new Administration. But when the President refused to agree to any talks unless they began with a summit I supported a last effort to set one up, although both Rusk and I assumed that the Soviet Union would not be interested. Near the end of December, President Johnson learned, rather bitterly, that Nixon had secretly told the Russians he was opposed to a Johnson-Kosygin meeting. Thus the start of arms-control talks was delayed for a year while the new Administration organized itself and sorted out its policies and priorities.

President Johnson's power was waning as fast in Saigon as in Moscow. Almost contemptuously, Ky told Bunker on the day after the election that it might take two months—just about the length of time left to the Johnson Administration—to resolve his government's problems with the negotiating format. On November 7th, I told the President that the only way to move the negotiations would be for Nixon to send word to Thieu that he wanted progress before January 20, 1969. I urged the President to meet with his successor immediately to make clear that it was in everyone's interests to get the talks started.

President Johnson put the case for coöperation to the President-elect in a meeting on November 11th in the Cabinet Room. Rusk, Wheeler, Rostow, Helms, and I joined the discussion. Nixon came alone, pointedly leaving behind the man who had been his foreign-policy adviser during the campaign, Richard Allen. Rather opaquely, Nixon said he found no significant differences between his views on Vietnam and those of the Johnson Administration. "I will do nothing [until the Inauguration] unless it is seen to be helpful by you," he added. "We must be a united front." This from the man whose agents had sung the song of dissension to Saigon only a few days earlier.

"You can be very helpful in the next sixty-five days," I said. "I know you want to wind this up as much as we do."

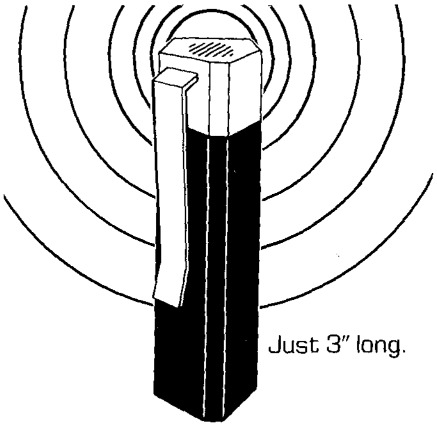
"The quicker the better," President-elect Nixon replied.

On November 12th, just a week after the election, the South Vietnamese Information Minister, Ton That Thien, stated publicly that the Johnson Administration had halted the bombing of North Vietnam and agreed to the Paris talks without Saigon's approval. An enraged President Johnson called me early that morning to ask me to rebut this charge in a press conference. No press conference I have ever given has been more deliberately angry. Speaking calmly, but using strong language, to make sure that Saigon's constant attempts to thwart the negotiations were understood, I said that we had had a "full and complete" understanding with Saigon until "the very last instant" and "then suddenly . . . Saigon change[d] its mind and decide[d] not to go ahead." Whether or not Saigon joined us at the Paris meetings, I said, the President "owed it to the American people to proceed with the talks."

My remarks stunned Saigon and shocked many Americans, including some in the Administration. Until then we had carefully minimized in public our differences with Saigon; now they were out in the open. Thieu told his closest advisers that he feared I would attempt to overthrow or assassinate him—that he would meet "the same fate as [Ngo Dinh] Diem"—before the Johnson Administration left office, a fanciful concern that Kissinger also mentioned, in comments he made to William F. Buckley before he was appointed Nixon's national-security assistant.

PRESIDENT JOHNSON still acted as if every one of his decisions mattered, but our actions became less important with each day that passed. If Saigon could stall into mid-January, then the Johnson Administration would become irrelevant. That was the real cause of the famously stupid argument over the shape of the table in Paris—a dispute that, understandably, subjected all the parties concerned to ridicule and scorn. How could diplomats argue over the shape of a table in Paris while young men were dying in Southeast Asia?

The whole matter, which ultimately lasted more than sixty days, would have been only absurd if it had not been tragic. The South Vietnamese wanted Hanoi and the National Liberation Front to sit as a single delegation in Paris, and demanded a seating arrangement, a specific table shape, flags, and nameplates that reflected their point of view. Hanoi insisted that the N.L.F. be seated as a separate delegation, at a



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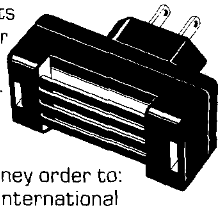

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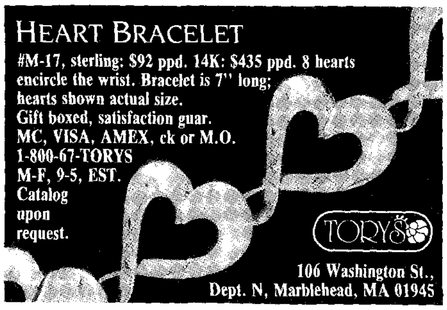

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square table, with two different nameplates and two different flags. Our position was simple: four delegations, a round table, no flags, no nameplates. In one meeting at the White House, we considered nine different table arrangements to address this problem. I thought it was one of the silliest discussions in which I had ever participated.

At the Tuesday Lunch of January 7th, the President said, "I'm getting fed up." He turned to Rusk and said, "I want these talks to start before January 20th even if we have to admit that Clark has been right all along."

The President instructed Rusk to send a stern letter to Thieu, warning him that we would proceed without the South Vietnamese if they continued to block agreement. When I read Rusk's telegram, however, I noticed that he had given Bunker discretionary authority to deliver the message either by letter or orally. Fearing that Bunker would soften the message again, I protested to the President, and he told Rusk he wanted the message delivered as a letter. The letter finally broke open the logjam, and the last ridiculous details of the argument over the table shape were resolved on January 16th, four days before the end of the President's term. But Saigon deliberately delayed the start of the talks until January 25, 1969, when Nixon would be President and could receive the public acclaim for them.

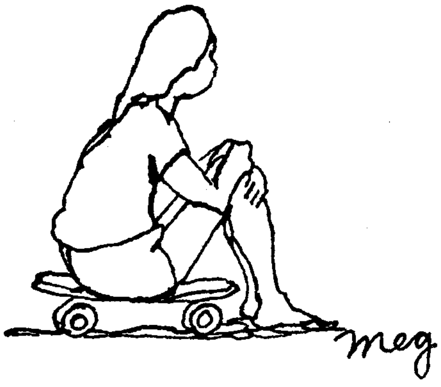
I HAD always remembered how President Truman left Washington by train on January 20, 1953, ignored and almost forgotten in the excitement over Eisenhower's Inauguration. I did not wish Lyndon Johnson to suffer the same fate. Accordingly, in July I had asked the President and Mrs. Johnson if they would let Marny and me give a luncheon in their honor on January 20, 1969. Despite the chill that Vietnam was then causing between us, the Johnsons accepted, and they made up the guest list themselves; it included their family, most of the Cabinet, some members of the White House staff, and a few friends. All told, we invited about fifty people.

President Johnson, of course, had to attend the Inauguration of his successor, and so did Hubert Humphrey. I stayed home and watched on television as we prepared for the luncheon. When I looked out the window shortly after Nixon had finished his Inaugural Address, I saw, to my astonishment, that hundreds of people, who had read in the press about the luncheon, had assembled on our front lawn. For a moment, I feared that Lyndon Johnson was going to be subjected to one last, unnecessary anti-war demonstration, but then I saw signs in the crowd saying "WELL DONE, LYNDON" and "WE STILL LOVE YOU, LYNDON."

The Johnsons and the Humphreys came directly to our house from the Capitol. It was a raw, cold day, and a fine mist of rain was falling as they arrived. When the man who had been President a few minutes earlier got out of his limousine, the crowd rushed across our soaked, frozen lawn and surrounded his car. He kissed a few babies, shook a few hands, and walked into the house, immensely pleased. "They didn't come to see the *President*," he said to me. "They came to see Lyndon B. Johnson." He took his grandson out on the front porch and held him up to show the crowd, which cheered wildly.

Inside our house, the party went on for several hours—a sort of last roundup before we all went back to our separate lives. "This was an assembly of old friends who had . . . been with us in sunshine and in sorrow," Johnson wrote in his memoirs. After the luncheon, President Johnson asked me to join him upstairs in one of the bedrooms, and told Marny to summon Lady Bird, Dean Rusk, Averell Harriman, and William S. White, who was his oldest and closest journalist friend. Then, in classic L.B.J. fashion, he unveiled a final surprise: he presented the Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award, to each of us.

IN the first few months of 1969, I stayed in fairly regular contact with several members of the new Administration, including Kissinger, Secretary of State William P. Rogers, and, especially, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird, who invited me regularly to luncheons and private meetings at the Pentagon. My conversations with them left me with the impression that they were looking for ways to get out of Vietnam, either through negotiations or through a gradual withdrawal of American forces and a simultaneous buildup of the South Vietnamese. This encouraged me, and, without criticizing the Nixon Administration, I began speaking out frankly about the war, since I was unconstrained by the limitations of public service.



My brief honeymoon with the Nixon Administration came to an abrupt end in June, after I published the most important article of my career, "A Viet Nam Reappraisal: The Personal History of One Man's View and How It Evolved," which appeared in the summer, 1969, issue of *Foreign Affairs*. The United States, I proposed, should withdraw a hundred thousand American troops by the end of 1969 and all ground combat forces by the end of 1970. Saigon would get serious about the negotiations in Paris only when it realized that our commitment was limited and some political compromise with Hanoi was unavoidable. Furthermore, I said, the Saigon government could never create a strong political structure "while our presence hangs over them so massively." Wanting the South Vietnamese to use the time we gave them during a phased withdrawal to strengthen themselves and negotiate with Hanoi and the N.L.F., I proposed that we leave behind air and logistic forces for an unspecified period. I refrained from advocating a "date certain" for a complete pullout, because I felt that such a suggestion would reduce the impact of the article among the moderate members of Congress and the public, to whom it was primarily addressed. I also traced my own evolution on the Vietnam issue, describing frankly my early support for the war and the reasons for my growing disillusionment.

All this created quite a sensation, and the article was widely reprinted. For the first time, a major participant in the shaping of the policy had admitted that we had been mistaken, and had outlined a strategy for American disengagement. Most of the response to the article was favorable. From members of the military, I received letters that gave

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HEY, NO PROBLEM.
WOODMAN

• •

me hope that the article might contribute to bipartisan support for a policy of gradual disengagement.

But two prominent men did not appreciate the article. From his ranch, President Johnson acknowledged an advance copy only with a brief and cold note signed by Tom Johnson, who was one of his assistants, which said that President Johnson "thought his opinion could not have weight or consideration and, therefore, he did not respond." From friends I heard that Lyndon Johnson was furious at what he considered an attempt by me to glorify myself. In this view he was wrong; I had nothing to gain from further involvement in the nasty public debate over Vietnam. I viewed the article as part of an obligation I owed to the American public, and especially to the half-million Americans still in the war zone, to help solve the most important policy issue of our time.

The other prominent person who did not like the article was President Nixon. Ironically, it was published only eleven days after Nixon, during a summit meeting with Thieu at Midway Island, in the Pacific, announced the first reduction in troop levels in Vietnam—a pullout of twenty-five thousand troops—over General Abrams' objections. Since I would have recommended a similar action if I had still been at the Pentagon, I had welcomed the step publicly. In fact, so close was Nixon's action to steps I had been advocating that Robert Pursley, who was now a general and working for Mel Laird, had called me from Midway as soon as President Nixon made the announcement, simply to share the moment. Pursley's call strengthened my impression that my article was consistent with the direction in which the Administration was moving. Moreover, neither Kissinger nor Laird had objected when I told them in advance about the article.

Although the article contained not a word of criticism of the new Administration, President Nixon did not view it as supportive. The day after it was published, he denounced both me and my proposal in a press-conference comment later described by a writer in the *Times* as a "classic Nixonism—the pious disclaimer followed by the distortion and innuendo." Nixon said:

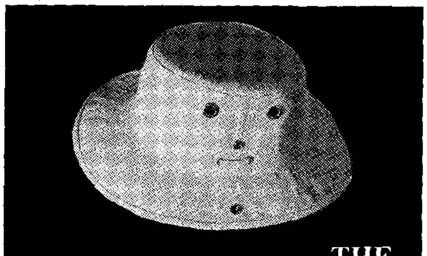
> I noted Mr. Clifford's comments in the magazine *Foreign Affairs*, and naturally, I respect his judgment as a former Secretary of Defense. I would point out, however, that for five years in the Administration in which he was Secretary of Defense in the last part, we had a continued escalation of the war. . . . In addition to that we found that in the year—the full year in which he was Secretary of Defense, our casualties were the highest of the whole five-year period. And as far as negotiations were concerned, all that had been accomplished—as I indicated earlier—was that we had agreed on the shape of the table. Now this is not to say that Mr. Clifford's present judgment is not to be considered because of the past record. It does indicate, however, that he did have a chance in this particular respect and did not move on it then.

Nixon finished with a comment that made headlines and left him vulnerable to subsequent charges that he had misled the public about the pace of his withdrawals: "I would hope that we could beat Mr. Clifford's timetable, just as I think we've done a little better than he did when he was in charge of our national defense."

From then on, my relations with the Nixon Administration were virtually nonexistent, and they collapsed completely, except for my continued friendship with Mel Laird, when Nixon invaded Cambodia, in April, 1970.

ON April 20, 1970, Nixon announced a reduction in the troop ceiling of a hundred and fifteen thousand, and said there would be a further reduction of a hundred and fifty thousand by the spring of 1971. That would leave two hundred and eighty-four thousand Americans in Vietnam by mid-1971. I felt that these withdrawals were too little and too late, and considerably slower than he had suggested less than a year earlier, in response to my article in *Foreign Affairs*. On April 23rd, only a week before the invasion of Cambodia, Secretary of State Rogers—presumably because he was out of touch with his own President's thinking—told Congress that the Administration fully recognized "that if we escalate and get involved in Cambodia with our ground troops, that our whole program is defeated."

Then came the stunning Presidential speech of April 30, 1970. After years of requests, the military, supported by Ellsworth Bunker, finally received permission to fight inside Cambodia. But they failed to destroy the military headquarters of the Communists in the South, though Nixon had said that that was the purpose of the action. By driving the Communists farther toward the populated center of Cambodia, the invasion brought the war to the heart of that previously peaceful nation, with tragic consequences that have lasted into the nine-



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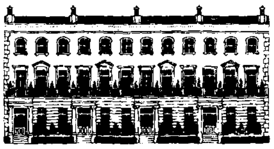

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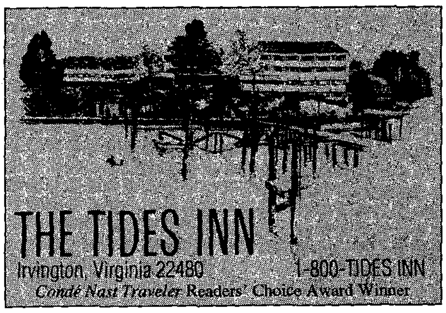

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teen-nineties. Within days, the campuses in the United States were aflame with demonstrations, student strikes, and a new wave of protests, which culminated in the tragic deaths at Kent State and Jackson State.

Outraged at the incomprehensible decision that had triggered these events, I wrote an article for *Life*. This time, I was not bipartisan. In my previous article I had been frank in accepting responsibility for errors I had made or been associated with. But now I felt justified in publicly attacking the Cambodian invasion. This was an action I had opposed throughout the Johnson years, and especially during a final debate, in mid-December, 1968, on the military's request to go into Cambodia. Calling President Nixon's action "reckless" and "foolhardy," I suggested that the Administration was "leading us more deeply into Vietnam rather than taking us out." The Cambodian incursion was "an infinitely greater mistake" than the Bay of Pigs, I wrote. I was particularly concerned that the invasion had "greatly expanded the danger of the conflict spreading throughout Cambodia"—an all too accurate prediction, as it turned out. I wrote that the Nixon Administration was now following "a formula for perpetual war," and that I saw only one way to stop the pursuit of a "military victory that cannot be won": a public announcement that "all U.S. forces are to be removed from any combat role anywhere in Southeast Asia no later than Dec. 31, 1970, and that all U.S. military personnel will be out of Indochina by the end of 1971, at the latest, provided only that arrangements have been made for the release of all U.S. prisoners of war."

The reaction to the *Life* article, which appeared in the May 22nd issue, was even stronger than the reaction to the article in *Foreign Affairs*. The *Life* article was reprinted around the world, and I was deluged with requests to speak. The White House, upset at the amount of coverage I received from the television networks, protested that it deserved equal time to defend its policies—as if an incumbent Administration did not have almost unlimited access to television. Administration spokesmen used the usual method to try to discredit my proposals: ignore the message and attack the messenger. In one fairly typical incident, which came to my attention through a friendly British diplomat, the Nixon White House sent the British Ambassador a "compendium" of statements I had made in the nineteen-sixties on Vietnam in order to suggest what I had never tried to hide—that I had changed my position on the war.

IN the spring of 1972, Hanoi, obviously aware of the meaning of another American election year, launched the biggest offensive since Tet in 1968. But Nixon and Kissinger had skillfully set in motion two far-reaching policies that reduced the political impact of the war: the opening of contacts with mainland China, and the negotiation, at long last, of a series of significant arms-control agreements with the Soviet Union. Even if one disagreed with the Administration on Cambodia and Vietnam, it was impossible to deny the value and the historic importance of these two achievements. Ironically, both actions would have been part of Hubert Humphrey's agenda if he had been elected in 1968.

With eerie symmetry, history replayed itself in 1972. In mid-October, almost four years to the day after Thieu refused to go along with the agreement negotiated in Paris by Harriman and Vance, he did it again, refusing to accept an agreement negotiated in Paris by Kissinger. When Kissinger flew to Saigon to obtain the government's approval, Thieu told him that the agreement was unacceptable, because it allowed Hanoi to leave North Vietnamese troops in the South and did not accept the DMZ as a dividing line between the two nations. Furious, Nixon ordered Kissinger to hold a press conference just before the election, and in the press conference Kissinger announced that "peace is at hand." I watched this piece of deception with a sense of how unnecessary it all was. The war could have ended more than four years earlier.

President Nixon responded to the stalemate in a manner that had often tempted President Johnson but that he had always resisted. Holding Hanoi more accountable than Saigon for the breakdown of negotiations, and wanting to gain Thieu's support for the agreement, Nixon sent American warplanes back over North Vietnam, in the famous "Christmas bombing" of 1972. Hard-line supporters of the war have always argued that the bombing resulted in significant concessions by Hanoi, but I do not believe this to be the case. If the bombing had any impact, it was on Thieu, who could point to it as a reason to trust the Nixon Administration more than he had trusted Johnson in 1968. But the Christmas bombing was unnecessary: Nixon's November landslide victory over Senator George McGovern, not the bombing, was the key factor in bringing both Saigon and Hanoi back to the table for the last round of negotiations.

Perhaps most important of all from Hanoi's point of view was the deal the North Vietnamese had obtained from the Nixon Administration. This was, to my mind, the final irony of Vietnam. The ceasefire agreement signed in Paris on January 27, 1973, was roughly similar to proposals that Harriman, Vance, Warnke, and I had been making since the summer of 1968, more than four years earlier. Nixon made a key concession to Hanoi when he agreed to let it keep its troops in the South after the final American withdrawal; Hanoi's reciprocal compromise, the dropping of its long-standing demand that the United States get rid of the Thieu regime before any ceasefire, was really of minimal importance. As long as the North Vietnamese were permitted to keep their forces in the South, leaving Thieu in power in Saigon was not a significant long-term concession by Hanoi. Hanoi would be free to fight on, with the presence of regular North Vietnamese troops inside South Vietnam accepted by international agreement, and with no American force opposing them.

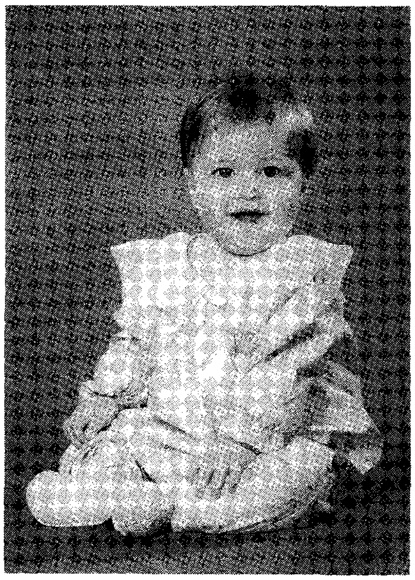
I did not criticize the agreement, because it allowed us to extricate our troops from Vietnam and get our P.O.W.s back—two goals I had long advocated. But the nature of the agreement, with its concessions by the United States, did not in any way justify the additional four years of war and death in Vietnam, the expansion of the war into Cambodia, the tremendous costs at home, and the loss of American prestige abroad. Nixon could have negotiated essentially the same agreement with Hanoi at the beginning of his Administration, when his leverage with both Saigon and Hanoi was far greater and the casualty lists were far shorter.

At the end of the Vietnam War, there was much talk of the "lessons learned" in Vietnam. The implication was that, having suffered an undeniable defeat, we could agree on why it had happened and prevent it from ever happening again. Unfortunately, history does not work in such simple ways. Almost two decades after the last American troops left Vietnam, the debate over why we lost continues. As President Bush rightly said in his Inaugural Address, on January 20, 1989, Vietnam "cleaves us still." I am sure that on April 30, 2000—the twenty-fifth anniversary of the fall of Saigon—Americans will turn on the morning television programs and see aging veterans of the war once more arguing over what the lessons of Vietnam really were.

The unrepentant hawks and those who do not remember or never knew what the battlefield situation actually was offer an easy explanation of the disaster: failure to use enough military force to achieve our objectives, and betrayal on the home front. I have some sympathy, but only a limited amount, for the first point. I have none for the second.

On the first point: As I have said previously, I do not believe that we should send American military forces overseas to fight unless our national security is threatened. I believed that our national security was involved in Korea in 1950 but that it was never at stake in Vietnam. I did not object to the advisory effort begun under Eisenhower and expanded under Kennedy; I was prepared to risk the lives of a limited number of professional soldiers in pursuit of what I regarded as a legitimate foreign-policy objective—to help the South Vietnamese defend themselves against Communist aggression.

My objections to the decision to escalate our Vietnam involvement in 1965 are now well known, but I believed that once that decision was made the proper policy was to use greater military force immediately. The theories of "flexible response" and "graduated response" championed by Maxwell Taylor and Robert McNamara, and much in vogue in the mid-nineteen-sixties, were based on the idea that, as Dean Rusk once put it to me, "if we gradually increase our military pressure, Hanoi will eventually have to cry 'uncle,' because they know they are facing the most powerful nation on earth." This theory worked splendidly in a non-shooting confrontation between the two nuclear superpowers in



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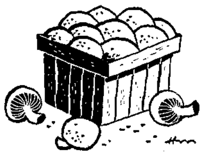
Cuba in 1962, but it was inappropriate to the circumstances of a shooting war, against guerrillas on the other side of the globe. It made no sense to me to apply the theory of gradual escalation to the circumstances of Vietnam. If we could not quickly convince the Communists that they must negotiate or quit, we would not be able to stay the course. Time, as Nicholas Katzenbach wrote in an eloquent memorandum to President Johnson in 1967, was on the side of our adversary.



Every student of the French defeat in Indochina in 1954 and of our own experience in Korea should have known that time was not on our side. Yet our political and military leaders in the mid-nineteen-sixties insisted on a policy in which the light at the end of the tunnel kept receding. When the American public finally demanded the end of a war that seemed endless, the creators and supporters of the policy—the hawks in both parties—caved in, reached an agreement that virtually doomed Saigon's chances of surviving, and blamed the anti-war movement, the doves in Congress, and the American press, which they accused of biased reporting.

This is nonsense, and is perhaps the most dangerous of the new myths that the right wing has tried to perpetrate on the American public concerning Vietnam. The truth is that it was the hawks, not the doves, who weakened America, by pursuing the war for so long. The hawks argued that America's worldwide strength and credibility were on the line in Vietnam, but this was not true. They argued that Vietnam was the Munich of the nineteen-sixties, but this was not true. By putting our national prestige on the line where our ability to control events was at its weakest, the hawks undermined the prestige they claimed to be protecting. After the failure of the policies they had advocated, they sought to hold those who had opposed the war responsible for America's defeat instead of accepting responsibility for the poor strategy and poor leadership they themselves had brought to bear in Vietnam.

They were aided in this effort by the nature of the anti-war movement in the United States, much of which took on an ugly, unpatriotic, anti-American tone. But the facts of the war in Indo-China remained: the war was unwinnable at any reasonable level of American participation; it was a tragic mistake; it weakened us while it was going on, but not after our involvement in it ended. In fact, our partners and allies in Europe and the rest of Asia were much relieved when we finally extricated ourselves from Indo-China. The dominoes of Southeast Asia did not topple after Saigon and Phnom Penh fell, in 1975; on the contrary, the non-Communist nations of the region began an era of coöperation and economic growth, which had been held back by the war. Southeast Asia became the premier growth region of the world in the fifteen years following the end of the war. Our relations with the other nations of the region, including Japan and China, improved.

Did this constitute the abandonment of a friend and ally, as the hawks have so often charged? Hardly. The length of time that our nation committed itself to Vietnam and the price we were willing to pay in pursuit of our objectives were impressive by any standard. We sent troops and military advisers to Vietnam from the late nineteen-fifties until 1973, making Vietnam the longest war in American history. Even after our last combat troops were withdrawn, in 1973, we continued to send aid and civilian advisers to South Vietnam for two more years. All told, the United States sent more than two and a half million Americans to Southeast Asia. More than fifty-five thousand of them died. We spent nearly a hundred and fifty billion dollars in pursuit of our objective. Over this long period, the United States gave the South Vietnamese an extraordinary amount of assistance—more than it has ever given any other nation. Our South Vietnamese allies—fractious, corrupt, and poorly led—failed. The United States did not. Our allies were given every chance to survive and succeed. We should not draw the wrong lessons from Vietnam. It was a defeat, but not because we didn't stay the course. I believe that, rather than lacerate ourselves for losing in Vietnam, we can look back today and say that Vietnam demonstrated America's willingness to make an enormous commitment to a friendly nation. We did everything we could reasonably do to help the South Vietnamese—and more.

Some have argued that if the United

States had stayed the course in Vietnam we could have won. That is a misinformed view. If we had continued our commitment, we would still be in Vietnam today, propping up whatever government was in power in Saigon and enduring a long-term guerrilla war, against an enemy that could surge and recede as it wished, and inflict casualties on American forces whenever that suited its purposes. At a minimum, we would be facing a kind of Southeast Asian version of Northern Ireland. Such an involvement would continue to divide our nation at home, prevent other successes in our international relations, divide us from our allies, and keep us from concentrating on our other, higher priorities. There is no chance that the American public would have tolerated such a prolongation of the war.

The war was not lost at home, as is so often stated. It was lost where it was fought—in the jungles and paddy fields of Southeast Asia and in the offices of a corrupt and incompetent ally. If the enemy had been reduced in strength or driven back into North Vietnam within a reasonable period, if there had been steady and sustained progress, the American people would have continued to support the policy and its Presidents. They did not wish to see America suffer its first defeat in a foreign war.

Everyone who participated in the decisions between the late nineteen-fifties and 1975 must accept some of the responsibility for the errors in judgment, strategy, and tactics which were made, and for the unnecessary casualties, both Vietnamese and American, that resulted from the errors. Almost none of those involved have accepted any responsibility for what happened, preferring to look elsewhere for explanations of the tragedy. But the facts are simple: We overestimated our allies, underestimated our adversary, and thought that the American presence on the battlefield would be sufficient to change the situation in our favor. We were wrong.

—CLARK CLIFFORD
WITH RICHARD HOLBROOKE

(This is the last part of a three-part article.)

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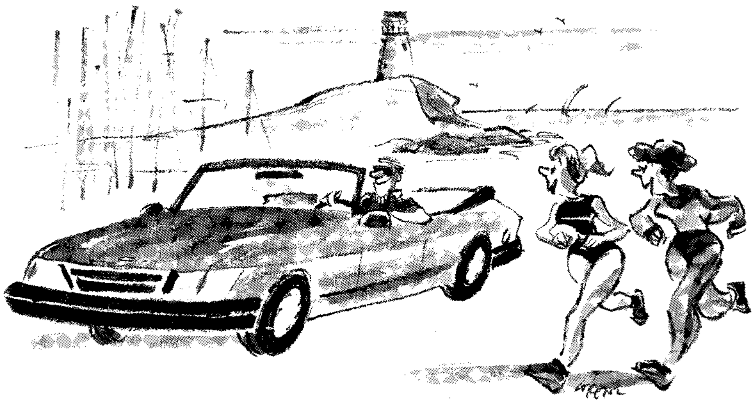

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THE THEATRE

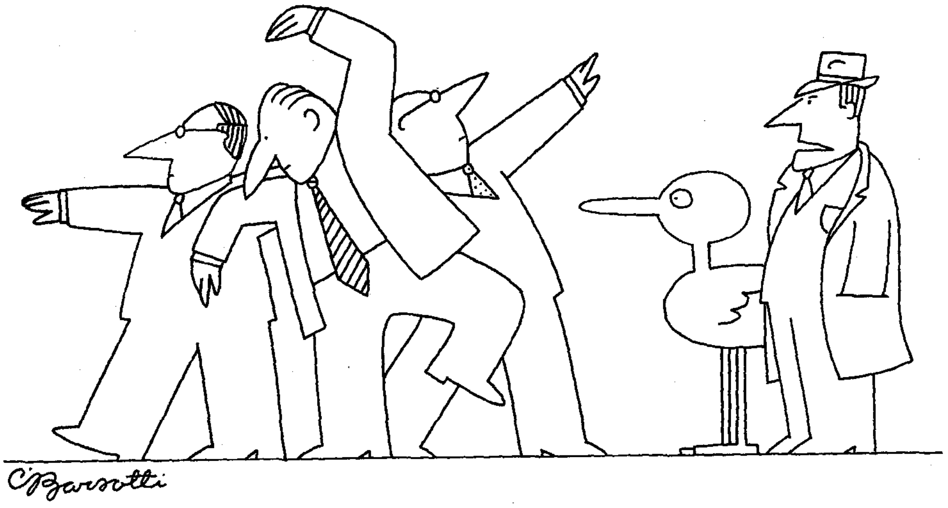
Alumnus

A. R. Gurney's "The Old Boy," at Playwrights Horizons, is set in a prestigious prep school in New England at commencement time. Sam, an alumnus and a diplomat who is about to run for governor of the state, has come to dedicate a tennis complex, whatever that is, in memory of a close friend and classmate named Perry, at the instigation of Perry's forceful mother. The action moves back and forth in time—Mr. Gurney being a master of broken chronology, along with a lot else—and we meet Sam and Perry as schoolboys, when Perry would rather spend his time listening to classical records than playing tennis or being part of any other group activity. "Fairy Perry," taunts Sam. Indeed. Perry, it seems, committed suicide after he was found to have AIDS, but not before he had been maneuvered by Sam into marrying a young woman named Alison, who had been Sam's lover. Also present are Bud, Sam's secretary and political adviser, and the rector of the school, himself of dubious sexuality. Near the end, in the middle of giving the commencement speech, Sam suddenly faces his betrayal of a girl and boy who loved and trusted him, and delivers, instead, a lament for all the loners and rejected people on earth, finally bursting into tears and thereby ruining his chance for political advancement.

Mr. Gurney is so persuasive and entertaining that it takes a beat or two to realize that AIDS is not usually the result of social ostracism. And weeping seems so out of character for Sam—not private weeping, of course, but public weeping—that the play turns soft and suspect. The trouble is not so much that Sam has lost his poise as that the playwright appears to have lost his confidence in the wit and humor and style with which he has always, up to now, approached every subject, no matter how serious. The performance, under John Rubinstein's direction, goes well, however, and the casting seems right in every instance. Stephen Collins is Sam; Matt McGrath is Perry; Nan Martin is the bossy mother; Lizbeth Mackay is Alison; Richard Woods is the rector; and Clark Gregg, in a dandy part, is particularly good as Bud. Admirable setting, lighting, and costumes by Nancy Winters, Nancy Schertler, and Jane Greenwood.

THE best thing to be said, though not the only good one, for Darrah Cloud's "The Stick Wife," at the Manhattan Theatre Club through May 19th, is that it brings Lindsay Crouse back to this city after much too long. Miss Crouse, who is worth waiting for, plays the wife of a Ku Klux Klansman, and the action, most of it the result of the bombing of a black church, takes place in her back yard, in Birmingham, in 1963. The opening act is first-rate, the writing spare and suitably spooky; the writing in the second act is a bit too creative for my taste. I kept getting lost, and mystified in the wrong way. Again, the acting is more than satisfactory. Margo Martindale and Julie White are two other Klan wives, and both are splendid. Michael Countryman, Lanny Flaherty, and Murphy Guyer are the loutish, rotten husbands, Mr. Guyer being especially menacing. The fine setting on the tiny stage was designed by James Youmans and lighted by Donald Holder, and the appropriate costumes (sheets and all) were designed by David C. Woolard.

—Edith Oliver



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Our Culture's Good

ACCORDING to the critic and historian Robert Hughes, the first play ever performed in Australia was an amateur production of George Farquhar's late-Restoration comedy "The Recruiting Officer," which was staged by a group of convicts in Botany Bay in 1789—a fact upon which the Australian writer Thomas Keneally based his novel "The Playmaker." Little is apparently known about the production except for a prologue that was for many years thought to have been written by one of the convicts:

> From distant climes o'er wide-spread seas
>   we come,
> Though not with much eclat or beat of
>   drum,
> True patriots all; for be it understood,
> We left our country for our country's
>   good. . . .

It is from this prologue that Timberlake Wertenbaker took her title for the play she based on Keneally's novel.

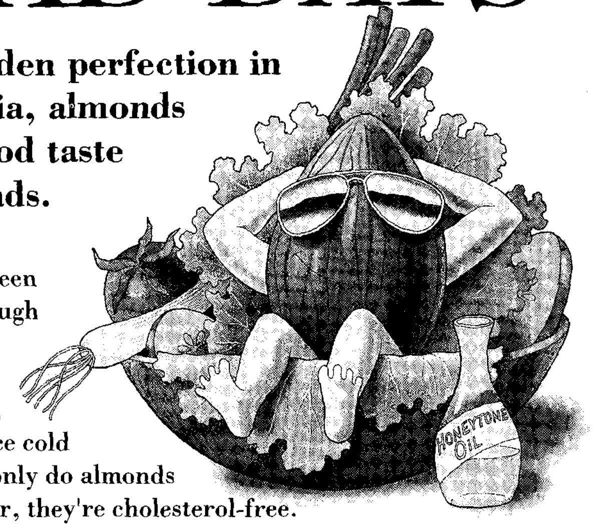
The production of "Our Country's Good" that the Broadway Alliance is presenting at the Nederlander Theatre hails from the Hartford Stage Company. That it proves a sad disappointment is due partly to truly terrible acting across the board—from a cast led by Peter Frechette—and partly to the general lameness of the play. The writing is artsy-dirty, wi characters waxing alternately pseudo-lyrical about sex and pseudo-crude about their bodily functions, and spitting and scratching their crotches a lot—all in the service of establishing the play's status as Serious Theatre. But when it comes to ideas "Our Country's Good" falls surprisingly short; in fact, it never gets much beyond the initial irony of society's outcasts performing a play written for and about high society.

It's hard to imagine someone's not being able to make more of this material. After all, it's not as if "The Recruiting Officer" were one of your stylized snuff-and-scandal comedies of manners. On its own terms, it has political content, which is one reason it appealed to Brecht, who in 1956 adapted the play, under the title "Trumpets and Drums," bringing it forward in time to the period of the American Revolution. Wertenbaker's play seems unaware of any of this: unaware of Brecht, unaware of anything else going on in the world at that time (such as the French Revolution), and—strangest of all—unaware of the bizarreness inherent in the idea of a production of this particular play in a vast, half-settled nation that consisted solely of convicts and soldiers.

Actually, "Our Country's Good" was written to be performed in repertory with "The Recruiting Officer" itself, at London's Royal Court Theatre. In London, where it was staged by Max Stafford-Clark, who virtually invented the kind of quick-change role-doubling the play requires, "Our Country's Good" probably had some resonance—particularly if it was performed with the blend of subtlety and belligerence which has made the Royal Court famous. Presumably, the key to the whole thing was versatility (with actors who played convict-actors in the Wertenbaker taking on corresponding roles in the Farquhar), the idea being to put spin on certain stock figures. At the Nederlander, the play is mute. Mark Lamos has assembled a cast that can at best evoke this or that stereotype (the upper-class Englishman, the Cockney) but in most cases—such as that of an actor who keeps roaring, ineptly and erratically, in various Celtic strains—doesn't even manage that much. It's not clear whether Mr. Lamos's direction or the size of the theatre is primarily at fault here, but neither seems to have helped.

In a way, it's a pity that "Our Country's Good" is being produced by the Broadway Alliance, whose mission, wonderful in concept, is to woo back to Broadway an audience of intelligent theatregoers. Nothing insults intelligent people so much as the kind of bogus high-culture event "Our Country's Good" turns out to be.

—Mimi Kramer



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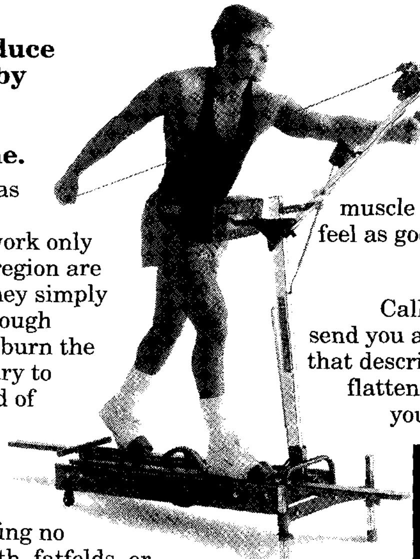

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MUSICAL EVENTS

Dear Hall, Beloved Place

CARNEGIE HALL celebrated its centenary, on May 5th, with massed choral singing in the morning and, in the afternoon and evening, gala concerts at which the New York Philharmonic and a parade of famous soloists—among them Marilyn Horne, Leontyne Price, Jessye Norman, Placido Domingo, Samuel Ramey, Isaac Stern, Midori, Mstislav Rostropovich, Yo-Yo Ma, and Alfred Brendel—were conducted by Zubin Mehta and James Levine. This was the climax, on the centenary day, of an eleven-day festival that included concerts given by the Boston Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. Most days, there were also concerts in Weill Recital Hall. Beethoven, Wagner, and Richard Strauss were favored composers. Tchaikovsky, who conducted at the 1891 inaugural concert, was represented by his First Piano Concerto, Van Cliburn the pianist, and by his Rococo Variations, Rostropovich the cellist. Dvořák's "New World" Symphony, which was first heard in Carnegie, in 1893, was played, of course. The living composer most prominent was Alfred Schnittke. His Second Cello Concerto had its American *première*, played by Rostropovich and the Boston Symphony, conducted by Seiji Ozawa; and his Concerto Grosso No. 5, a Carnegie centenary commission, had its première, played by Gidon Kremer and the Cleveland Orchestra, conducted by Christoph von Dohnányi.

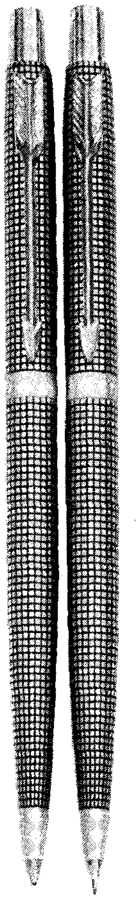
Schnittke, a copious composer, is now much performed and recorded. Earlier this year, the Kronos Quartet, in Alice Tully Hall, played his four string quartets. Composers are often most personal and concentrated when they are writing string quartets; and the Kronos concert offered an arresting and favorable survey of Schnittke's manners and development. His First Quartet (1966) is tautly serial. In the Second (1980), thematic material from Russian sacred music appears in Ligeti-like textures: the second movement is a rapid play of eight against seven against six against five; and, at the close, chant melodies fade into an ethereal glister of harmonics. The quartet, which was dedicated to the memory of Larissa Shepitko, for whose films Schnittke had written scores, is a moving and beautiful composition. The Third Quartet (1983) begins boldly with three quotations, in *crescendo from pianissimo to forte*: cadences from Lassus's Stabat Mater; the subject of the Grosse Fuge; and then its first four notes transposed to the D-E♭-C-B (or DSCH) pitches of Shostakovich's musical monogram. The three movements provide a virtuoso display of Schnittke's "polystylistics" (his own term) and his ability to digest quotations; the chromatic Beethoven theme begins to influence the Lassus, and soon Schnittke is composing freely with the new material of his own forging. The writing for the instruments is varied and resourceful. Of the Fourth Quartet (1989) I retain a less sharp impression. It may be the composer's homage to Alban Berg; it lasts more than twice as long as the First, and, like some of Schnittke's other recent music, it seems to ramble a bit. The committed Kronos performances were enhanced by a "presentation" in which apt lighting—the instrumentalists in sharp relief, a background of organ pipes gleaming gently under washes of color—played a helpful part. Few New York concerts are so attentively lit.

"Read him his rights!"

Schnittke's Viola Concerto (1985), dedicated to Yuri Bashmet, is generally considered the finest of his many concertos. The composer's openness to all kinds of music is here exuberantly apparent. A colleague wrote of "cadenzas in the pungently acerbic manner of Bartók . . . bursts of virtuoso sawing . . . long-breathed eloquence which often carries across radical fractures of idiom—ripe Mahler, spare Webern, salon-Romantic Spohr, Impressionist washes," and could have added that a main theme is made of the musicable letters of the dedicatee's name (in German transliteration): B♭-A-E♭-C-B-E. The disparate elements cohere more surely, I think, than do those of Schnittke's First Cello Concerto (1986), which reached New York in 1989, when it was played by Karine Georgian and the American Composers Orchestra. But that, too, is a stirring composition. Schnittke said that he viewed the cello soloist "as a hero, at times in confrontation with the authoritarian world around him." His Second Cello Concerto (1990) takes a similar viewpoint, and the hero's role is played by Rostropovich. Back in the early seventies, it seems—not long after the cellist's open letter to the Russian press in defense of Solzhenitsyn and in protest at Soviet cultural restriction—the seed of a Schnittke-Rostropovich collaboration was planted. For Rostropovich many a composer has written long, eloquent, charged, passionate solo lines—plunging, soaring, grieving, aspiring. And Schnittke does so here. Rostropovich had his role by heart, as ever fewer interpreters of new concertos now do have, and played from his noble heart with irresistible eloquence. *Von Herzen—Möge es zu Herzen gehen;* and it did. Comparisons with Shostakovich's First and Second Cello Concertos, which were also composed for Rostropovich—thirty-two and twenty-five years ago—are inevitable. The finale of Shostakovich's First was perceived by the conductor Kyril Kondrashin as "dialectically affirming victory through struggle." Other listeners heard, even in 1959, a note of disillusion, dissent, and despair in the apparent triumph; there is grotesquerie in the shrill cries of woodwinds. Schnittke's finale is tragic: a C-minor passacaglia, with echoes of a Passion chorale, grows ever denser and darker. But at the close the soloist, sounding the low C that has underpinned most of the movement, rises at the same time to an F-sharp four and a half octaves above. Tritones began the piece. This last tritone sounds like the gleam of an alternative; and a program note told us that the passacaglia theme derives from music that Schnittke wrote in 1974 for the film "The Agony," which was made by Elem Klimov, Shepitko's husband—a film that tells of (in Schnittke's words) "Russia's last weeks before the nightfall that has now lasted more than seventy years in the history of this country, followed by the break of a dawn which at the last remains still only a hope."

At the Cleveland Orchestra concert, Schnittke and Shostakovich were thrown into direct contrast. The new Concerto Grosso (which is in effect Schnittke's fifth violin concerto, since a solo violinist is dominant almost throughout) was preceded by Shostakovich's Second Violin Concerto, of 1967. I remember well its first Western performance—in London, soon after the Moscow première—when it was played by David Oistrakh and the London Symphony, conducted by Eugene Ormandy. A few days later, Igor Oistrakh, David's son, again with the London Symphony and Ormandy, played the heroic First Concerto, of 1948, in which conflicts of goodness and evil are made startlingly manifest. By contrast, the Second Concerto seemed slighter, somehow compromising, even conciliatory. But it no longer sounds that way. In the Carnegie performance, the last movement carried accents of satire and scorn which were scarce noticed before. Music's power is mysterious and not always specific. In "Mosè" Rossini wrote an aria for the heroine, after Moses has struck down Pharaoh's firstborn, that vividly expresses the text "Torments! afflictions! wild despairs! Ye shatter my heart!" In "Moïse," the revised version of "Mosè," the aria without change of note serves equally well to express another character's outburst of joy: "What hear I? O sweet intoxication! He is faithful to honor."

I am unsure what moral to draw. Singers sing, conductors conduct, players play, and listeners listen with preattuned perceptions, context-determined. When I heard Verdi's "Nabucco" in East Berlin twenty-five years ago, "Va pensiero"—the enslaved Jews' longing-for-freedom chorus—rang out with more than merely musical power. So



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in the Prague of those days did Dalibor's "Freedom" aria in Smetana's opera. Both numbers when strongly performed are stirring in any circumstances; they become doubly urgent when correspondences between the listeners' lives and the imagined scenes are close. Most great music ("all" would be going too far; one reveres Stravinsky's "Agon" in an absolute way) ties into moral, political, and religious beliefs. In the postwar decades, the best music coming out of Russia—from Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Schnittke, Gubaidulina—has compelled listeners to weigh content and context. Richard Taruskin has been writing trenchantly about the Prokofiev ambiguities. (Can one comfortably settle for the fact that Prokofiev, a born, vital composer, in his best Soviet scores celebrated the good aspects of Communism, and admire and enjoy and be moved by them, ignoring the incidental dross?) We know now that Shostakovich was no conformist and hear now that he built resistance and protest into scores that were nevertheless performed with acclaim in Stalin's Russia. Schnittke's music gets an especially sympathetic hearing—and sometimes, I think, too much praise—because in context he has been a resister, a protester, and has survived both professional and physical affliction. I hear his later works with mixed feelings: admiration of his natural creativity is tempered by uneasiness at his eager, almost overready adoption of whatever sound effects and musical procedures reach him from the West—from Ives, Cage, Ligeti, Carter, perhaps Maxwell Davies. For the Carnegie commission, he says, he "considered using musical elements from Carnegie Hall's first programs a hundred years ago" but decided instead to depict the seasons, from spring to winter, with a final hint of a new spring. The Concerto Grosso No. 5 includes the sounds of a harpsichord, a flexatone, and an offstage amplified piano—fancy effects, but sensitively used. Mr. Kremer was the soloist and Mr. Dohnányi the conductor at the first performance of Schnittke's Violin Concerto No. 4 (in which bongos, harpsichord, and prepared piano are employed), in Berlin seven years ago. They were cogent interpreters of its successor.

Miss Norman was the heroine of the Met Orchestra concert, at which she sang Berlioz's early cantata "La Mort de Cléopâtre" with imagination, dramatic vigor, vocal splendor, and some lovely smoked pianissimi. Her Immolation Scene from "Götterdämmerung" was also magnificent, but toward the close Mr. Levine's enthusiastic brasses overpowered even her. The concert began with an exquisitely detailed, tonally very beautiful account of Alban Berg's Three Pieces for Orchestra, and included an exquisitely detailed, tonally very beautiful "Siegfried Idyll."

The afternoon gala began with Joan Tower's bright "Third Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman," which was commissioned for the occasion, and is dedicated to Frances Richard, the director of the symphony and concert department of ASCAP. (The evening concert began with Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man.") Miss Horne sang three songs from Copland's "Old American Songs"—"Simple Gifts," "Long Time Ago," and "At the River"—with exceptional feeling and beauty. In "Elisabeth's Greeting," Miss Norman's glad cries of

> Thee, dear hall, I greet again,
> joyfully I greet thee, beloved place. . . .
> Receive my greeting! Receive my greeting!
> Thou dear hall, receive my greeting!

rang out in a way that combined context with content. Thirty years ago, as Lincoln Center rose, Carnegie Hall was threatened with demolition once the Philharmonic abandoned it. Isaac Stern stepped forward to save it. Since then it has flourished. It has survived the acoustically unhappy renovation it suffered five years ago, when the platform and main floors and the ceiling above the platform were rebuilt. Beside it, Carnegie Hall Tower, a commercial development, has now risen without, so far, offering to Carnegie audiences the spacious foyers, the extra entrances, the restaurants, bars, buffets, bookshops, and record shops of a modern concert hall. A museum has been opened, however; its first exhibition is devoted to Tchaikovsky and his participation in the first Carnegie concerts. Despite some chances missed, despite the patchy new acoustics, despite the continuing audience discomfort, Carnegie remains the dear, hallowed nineteenth-century hall, saved from destruction, that Miss Norman scanned so eagerly and greeted so generously.

—Andrew Porter

THE CURRENT CINEMA

Grotesques

Carson McCullers' story "The Ballad of the Sad Café" is a fable about unhappy love in a tiny Deep South mill town. "The town is lonesome, sad, and like a place that is far off and estranged from all other places in the world" is McCullers' description of the setting, and the voice we hear in this sentence has a far-off quality of its own. It has the familiar lulling cadence of the yarn spinner, but it's not exactly comforting: it's dreamy and urgent, like the voice of a desperate, too imaginative child. The café, where most of the action takes place, is the only spot of joy and warmth in the dreary nameless town. It is owned and operated by Miss Amelia Evans, a tall, awkward woman who is the town's wealthiest resident and its most forbidding eccentric. This café, we're told, started as Miss Amelia's store, where she sold all sorts of necessary goods, including her own homemade medicines and whiskey. It becomes a café on the night when her cousin Lymon, a hunchbacked dwarf, comes to town, and Amelia falls in love with him; she opens up the store and invites him in to eat dinner and drink some of her whiskey. "The liquor of Miss Amelia has a special quality of its own," the narrator tells us. "It is clean and sharp on the tongue, but once down a man it glows inside him for a long time afterward." And it has an almost spiritual effect on those who drink it: "Things that have gone unnoticed, thoughts that have been harbored far back in the dark mind, are suddenly recognized and comprehended. . . . A weaver might look up suddenly and see for the first time the cold, weird radiance of midnight January sky, and a deep fright at his own smallness stop his heart."

That is also, I think, a fair description of the effect that Carson McCullers' prose can have on a reader. Her style is unique, homemade; it's a rich brew of grotesque comedy and heartfelt adolescent poetry. (McCullers was in her early twenties when she wrote "The Ballad of the Sad Café." All the work she's known for—"The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter," "The Member of the Wedding," and "Reflections in a Golden Eye"—was written before she was thirty.) It's an amazing voice: her rhythms are odd, surprising, alternately rolling and jagged, and we sense a peculiar self-deprecating humor in even her wildest flights of romanticism. There's probably no "visual equivalent" of the narrative style of "The Ballad of the Sad Café." The movie version of the story, directed by Simon Callow from a script by Michael Hirst, is a brave undertaking, and it is clearly a labor of love, but it's doomed. Like all the strange loves in McCullers' fable, it does not have a fortunate outcome: its object remains alone, untouched—impervious to the tenderest attentions.

Callow and Hirst have adapted "The Ballad of the Sad Café" very faithfully, but they've missed its elusive, slyly comic voice. The story unfolds in a solemn, glum, stately manner—more like a Biblical parable than like a crazy backwoods folktale. The filmmakers are too scrupulous: the movie doesn't give us the weird radiance of McCullers' moonshine prose. (This is one of the rare films that might have benefitted from a voice-over narration.) Stripped to its plot, "The Ballad of the Sad Café" seems rather precious, a Southern-gothic curiosity. Gawky, antisocial Amelia (Vanessa Redgrave) is immediately and inexplicably smitten with Lymon (Cork Hubbert), a lively little guy who doesn't really care much for her; the café is her way of pleasing him, and its festive atmosphere is meant to represent the transforming power of her love—it seems to bring the whole town to life. This idyll is interrupted by the return of one Marvin Macy (Keith Carradine), a man who was once, briefly, Amelia's husband. He loved her in the same unaccountable, heedless way in which she loves Lymon, but she refused to sleep with him and threw him out on the street. And Lymon adores Marvin Macy—thus completing a perfect circle of unrequited loves. Marvin and strapping Amelia ultimately do battle, in an epic fistfight in the café, and Marvin wins, because Lymon takes his side. Amelia, shattered, closes the café and never appears in public again, and the town reverts to its original dreariness. McCullers writes, "There is absolutely nothing to do in the town. Walk around the millpond, stand kicking at a rotten stump, figure out what you can do with the old wagon wheel by the side of the road near the church. The soul rots with boredom."

Part of the trouble with Callow's

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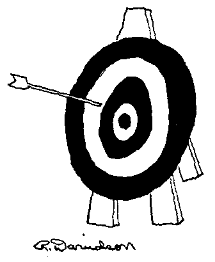
treatment of the story is that the town's brief renaissance, in the heyday of the café, isn't vividly rendered. The townspeople look like a gloomy, defeated bunch even when they're supposed to be having a good time. They are a faceless crowd, watching everything in stupefied silence. What's needed is something like the buzzing, unruly sense of life that Robert Altman brought to the frontier settlement of "McCabe & Mrs. Miller," or perhaps the magical strangeness of the awakened Scottish fishing village in Bill Forsyth's "Local Hero." Altman and Forsyth may be the only filmmakers who could have done justice to the ethereal flakiness of "The Ballad of the Sad Café"; it's no disgrace for Callow, a first-time director, to have failed. The filmmakers seem to have been deceived by the apparent simplicity of McCullers' style—its fablelike directness and its bedtime-story intimacy of tone. They've made the mistake of believing that this story could be told onscreen with very plain, stark means. They aim for a kind of mythic purity that's almost impossible to achieve in the movies. Despite the heroic efforts of Redgrave and Carradine, the characters in this picture don't seem quite human, and the stylized dialogue, much of it lifted outright from McCullers, doesn't have the poetic force that the filmmakers must have hoped it would have; everyone in the movie just sounds simpleminded. "The Ballad of the Sad Café" is a great piece of American literature not because it's a profound myth but because it's a beautiful monologue: part tall tale, part sermon, part patent-medicine spiel, part love letter. The movie reduces the unaccountable warming radiance of McCullers' language to things we merely see and hear.



ALL the action in Henry Jaglom's "Eating" takes place at the fortieth-birthday party of a Southern California woman named Helene (Lisa Richards). All the characters—thirty-eight of them—are women. One of the guests, a young Frenchwoman named Martine (Nelly Alard), is making a documentary about women and food. The women talk among themselves, refreshments are served, and Martine conducts a few interviews, and from this contrived situation a bizarre thesis emerges, a kind of variant of "You are what you eat." For women, Jaglom tells us, "you are what you throw up." None of the women at this party—with the exception of Helene's mother (Frances Bergen), who represents the values of an older generation—can eat without guilt; several of them have clinical eating disorders, for which they hate themselves. Jaglom, an independent filmmaker who distributes his movies himself, is advertising this picture as "A Very Serious Comedy About Women and Food," but its "serious" message is glibly offensive, and there's nothing funny about it.

The indefatigably untalented Jaglom has been turning out low-budget pictures like this for two decades: every couple of years, he releases a Cassavetes-like, semi-improvisatory movie about people (actors, that is) sitting around talking about deep personal stuff. This group-therapy style, in which the camera remains fixed as characters lob banal confessions and accusations at each other, is meant to create the illusion of raw emotional truth: it's artless, so it must be real. The bulimics' ball that Jaglom throws in "Eating" isn't much of a party, and it's bad therapy, too. The big naked truth that pops out of the cake is: women are so obsessed with their bodies that they're incapable of enjoying even the simple pleasure of eating. Jaglom would, of course, have us believe that this destructive obsession is the tragic result of society's oppressive standards of female beauty. And that's probably so. But what he has put on the screen is the unattractive spectacle of several dozen affluent women whining and kvetching about their weight; they seem to shut up only when they're bending over the toilet. (And it isn't fair to portray the American middle-class preoccupation with health and physical appearance entirely in terms of women's neuroses; it's not unheard-of for men to be vain about their waistlines or worried about losing their youth.) Whatever Jaglom may have intended, "Eating" winds up trivializing its theme and humiliating its subjects. By the end of the picture, the women at this party are about as sympathetic—and as real—as the gorging ghouls in "Night of the Living Dead."

—TERRENCE RAFFERTY

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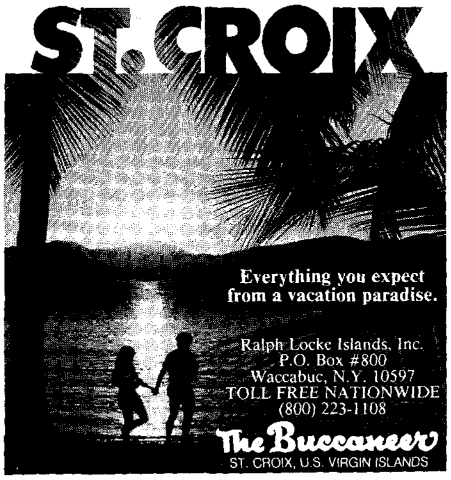
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BOOKS

Illiberalisms

"ILLIBERAL EDUCATION" (Free Press; $19.95) is Dinesh D'Souza's second book. (An admiring biography of the evangelist Jerry Falwell appeared in 1984.) Its subject is "the politics of race and sex on campus." D'Souza reports that "an academic and cultural revolution is under way at American universities"—a revolution that, he says, is being fought on behalf of the "victims" of racism and sexism, and that has affected the way colleges and universities decide which students to admit, which professors to hire, which books to read, and which subjects to teach. It has also enforced a style of what has come to be called (though D'Souza himself does not use the phrase much) "politically correct" speech: certain expressions—some obvious and some not so obvious—have been declared offensive to nonwhites, to women, or to homosexuals, and students and faculty who use those expressions are subject, on some campuses, to administrative discipline.

This is a topic that has attracted its share—possibly more than its share—of attention recently, and much of D'Souza's book is drawn from information that has already appeared in newspapers, news magazines, and journals of opinion. Many of the stories he has to tell will therefore be familiar to readers who have been keeping up with news from the academy. D'Souza has visited a number of campuses and talked with students, professors, and administrators, however, and is able to add some anecdotes of his own.

The tone throughout "Illiberal Education" is that of a man who is curious about the reports he has been hearing of campus strife over issues involving race and sex, and who, as a friend to liberal learning, is sympathetic to all the parties involved (or nearly all, for he cannot find a good word to say about homosexuality). D'Souza was born and raised in India and came to the United States as an exchange student in 1978, when he was seventeen, and in his opening chapter he says that he feels "a special kinship" with minority students, and believes that the university is "the right location for them to undertake their project of self-discovery." Nevertheless, he confesses, he is appalled by the conditions he has uncovered in the course of his research.

D'Souza remarks that "Illiberal Education" was written "from a position more informed, and I hope more mature, than that of my undergraduate days." This will be a mysteriously oblique sentence to many readers; the circumstances that prompted D'Souza to write it are worth recalling. After his arrival in the United States, he attended a public high school in Arizona for a year, and then entered Dartmouth College. There, as a sophomore, he became editor-in-chief of *The Dartmouth Review*, an off-campus newspaper founded in 1980 by students unhappy over what they regarded as Dartmouth's liberal tendencies, and in particular over its efforts to attract female, black, and Native American students. During D'Souza's tenure at *The Dartmouth Review*, the paper published an interview with a former leader of the Ku Klux Klan, illustrating it with a staged photograph of a black man hanging from a tree on the Dartmouth campus, and an article on affirmative action written in what was supposed to be a parody of black speech ("Now we be comin' to Dartmut and be up over our 'fros in studies, but we still be not graduatin' Phi Beta Kappa"); it once ran the slogan "The only good Indian is a dead Indian" on its back page; and it printed documents, stolen from the office of the Gay Student Alliance, that revealed the homosexuality of at least two Dartmouth students who did not wish it to be made public.

After graduating from Dartmouth, D'Souza went to Princeton, where he edited *Prospect*, an alumni magazine that had been started, by an organization called the Concerned Alumni of Princeton, in 1972, not long after the

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university began admitting women as undergraduates. Under D'Souza's editorship, at a time when Princeton was trying to increase the number of women in its student body and on its senior faculty, the magazine published an article making fun of women's studies, and an article, written by D'Souza, in which the sex life of a female undergraduate, who had declined to be interviewed by the magazine, was described without her consent. Since 1985, D'Souza has worked in Washington, D.C.: for a time, he was a domestic-policy analyst in the Reagan White House, and he is now a fellow of the American Enterprise Institute.

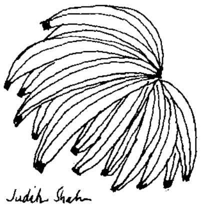
Apart from brief references to his association with *The Dartmouth Review* and to an "alumni magazine" that he edited at Princeton, D'Souza makes no mention of his own contributions to the campus tensions he now writes about with such concern. But it is not simply the lack of personal candor that tarnishes his book; it is also the careful omission of any mention of the reaction, in which he took such a disreputable part, against the first appearance on many American campuses of significant numbers of women, black Americans, and other new kinds of students. You would never suspect, from the way D'Souza tells the story, that anyone ever went out of his way to make those students feel less than fully at home. There are some illiberalisms that D'Souza has permitted himself to forget.

"ILLIBERAL EDUCATION" refers to recent events on many American campuses, but the book is organized as a series of case studies of six schools: Berkeley, Stanford, Howard, the University of Michigan, Duke, and Harvard. The problems at Berkeley that D'Souza discusses have mostly to do with admissions practices intended to increase the proportion of black and Hispanic students; those at Duke with hiring policies designed to attract black professors; and those at Stanford with efforts to change the curriculum in order to expose students to the ideas and arts of non-Western cultures. At Harvard and Michigan, there have been disputes over charges of verbal "harassment" of women and blacks, and at Howard students protesting the appointment of Lee Atwater, then the chairman of the Republican National Committee, to the board of trustees occupied administrative offices and forced not only the withdrawal of Atwater but the eventual resignation of the university's president, James Cheek. As part of his discussion of these situations and incidents, D'Souza provides some commentary on recent scholarly developments in African-American studies and in literary theory.

D'Souza is principally out to find the nonsense, and the people he meets on campuses around the country (or, [illegible] least, those he chooses to quote) are generally obliging. He asks a Berkeley administrator whether the high drop-out rate for black students at the university means that preferential admissions policies are not working, and is told, "Maybe it's *good* for them to go off and have their midlife crisis at 18 or 19." A Michigan law professor, discussing the way racism and sexism affect everything, explains that even technical questions like "how a cockpit should be constructed" have been settled according to white male norms. A Harvard student tells D'Souza that one thing she has learned in her courses in African-American studies is that "white people are more genteel and fake than black people."

He reports, as well, his own consistently good luck in turning the tables on the people he interviews. One of the consequences of Berkeley's efforts to increase the number of black and Hispanic students in each class is that black applicants with relatively low S.A.T. scores have been admitted and Asian-American applicants with relatively high ones have been refused. One of the rejected Asian-Americans threatened to sue Berkeley. When D'Souza asks a black Berkeley student what she thinks of that tactic, she tells him, "I wouldn't fight so hard to go somewhere that didn't want me"—a reply that gives D'Souza the opportunity to remind her that James Meredith, the first black person admitted to the University of Mississippi, wasn't wanted there, either. A white man who teaches a course in race relations at Duke tells him, "It *would* be better to have a black teach my course." Does this mean, D'Souza asks, that a woman should not teach Shakespeare? "Oh, I see what you're getting at," the teacher replies. "He was a man. Yes, that is a problem. I don't know the answer, I must confess." A dean at Harvard who specializes in racial issues informs D'Souza that in the Constitution black people are considered only three-fifths human. D'Souza argues that if slave owners had had their way when the Constitution was being drafted blacks would have counted as fully human, since that would have given slave owners greater voting power. "It's been a while since I read up on all that," the dean confesses.

D'Souza cites many examples, culled from various sources, of equally uninformed or unbalanced thinking. The law school of the State University of New York at Buffalo has adopted a resolution making it an offense for students to utter remarks "directed at another's race, sex, religion, national origin, age, or sexual preference." Such expressions, the law school says, will not be regarded as protected by the First Amendment, since "our intellectual community shares values that go beyond a mere standardized commitment to open and unrestrained debate." A Brandeis professor has written, in a professional publication, that she begins one of her courses by explaining, "It is not open to debate whether a white student is racist or a male student is sexist. He / she simply is." At the University of Connecticut, "misdirected laughter" suggesting a racial bias is a punishable offense, and so is "conspicuous exclusion from conversation." A student at the University of Pennsylvania wrote a note to a committee on "diversity education" in which she expressed her "deep regard for the individual and . . . desire to protect the freedoms of *all* members of society." The note was sent back by a university official with the word "individual" circled, and the comment "This is a RED FLAG phrase today, which is considered by many to be RACIST. Arguments that champion the individual over the group ultimately privilege the 'individuals' who belong to the largest or dominant group." A professor at Washington University objects to the word "seminar," and uses "ovular" instead.



There is a great deal more documentation in "Illiberal Education," but the phenomenon hardly needs more documentation. What it needs is a little explanation, and here D'Souza is stumped. He makes two attempts, neither of which is especially original. His first explanation is that the people who are busy politicizing academic culture today are the same people who did their best to wreck the American way of life in the sixties: they're back, and this time they have tenure. It's true that there are some tenured professors who happily identify themselves as veterans of sixties activism, and in some departments Marxists and radicals who have been professionally dormant for twenty years have been given new life by the sudden obsession with the racial and sexual politics of everything. But the grimmest and most orthodox partisans of "politically correct" thinking are junior professors, most of whom are under forty and many of whom are under thirty. And the undergraduates, of course, know only a little more about the sixties than they do about the Spanish-American War. D'Souza himself knows the period mostly by rumor, and he tends to use "sixties" simply as a scare word. "It is apparent to visitors that the 1960s have not really left Berkeley," he observes darkly at one point, describing the way the campus looked on one of his recent trips—to which one can only say that D'Souza never saw Berkeley in the sixties.

D'Souza's other explanation for what he calls "the victims' revolution" on campus is that it is the consequence of a lot of bad literary theory. The chapter on Duke is mostly devoted to this argument. On his visit to the campus, D'Souza dutifully went to have his nose tweaked by Stanley Fish, the chairman of the English Department, who told him that although "objectivists" think that standards are fixed and immutable, "the norms and standards to which our behavior conforms *are* us. They aren't a set of rules we consult." This unexceptionable proposition strikes D'Souza as the hidden rationale for policies that lower standards so that unqualified minority candidates can be hired, and it sets him off on a brief and rather wild survey of modern literary criticism, in which he misspells the names of the critic Fredric Jameson and the law professor Catharine MacKinnon; misidentifies René Wellek and Austin Warren's "Theory of Literature" (which he calls, incorrectly, "A Theory of Literature")—a book that established, in 1949, a view of literature most contemporary literary theory has reacted against—as the "genesis" of "*au courant*" criticism;

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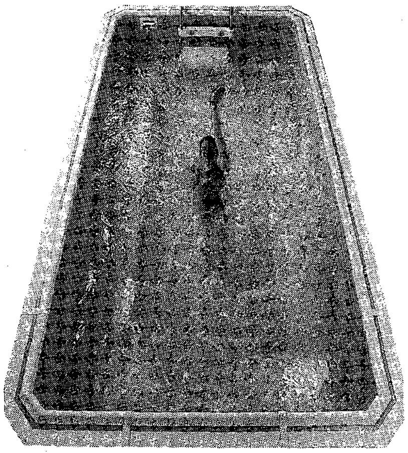

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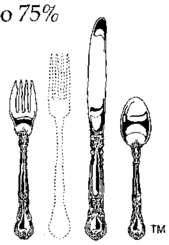

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compares (a common error) what English professors do with what Arnold, Hazlitt, and Samuel Johnson—critics who never had to send their work out for peer review—once did; and lumps together, as recent and pernicious developments, approaches to literature that date back, in some cases, to Aristotle. What he needs to prove, of course, is that philosophical relativism of the kind he associates with Fish has led to the hiring of unqualified faculty at Duke, but he is unable to name a single instance in which this has happened.

Like many people who write critically about the contemporary academy, D'Souza knows nothing about the history of the American university, and this makes it impossible for him to evaluate what he has observed. Things are bad, perhaps, but compared with what? In 1960, a year well within the memories of most senior professors and university administrators, ninety-four per cent of college students were white. (At private institutions, the figure was a little over ninety-six per cent.) Of the students making up the remaining six per cent, a third attended all-black or predominantly black institutions. Sixty-three per cent of college students were men; almost nine of every ten Ph.D.s awarded were awarded to men; and nearly eighty per cent of university faculty were men. Some of the most distinguished private colleges in the country did not admit women, and there were several public universities (not to mention private ones such as Duke) that did not admit black students. It is worth remembering that it was only thirty years ago this winter that Charlayne Hunter (now Charlayne Hunter-Gault, the public-television newscaster) entered the University of Georgia after a federal judge had compelled the university to admit her; a week after she enrolled, state officials returned to the court to ask whether they were also compelled to allow her to eat in the campus dining hall.

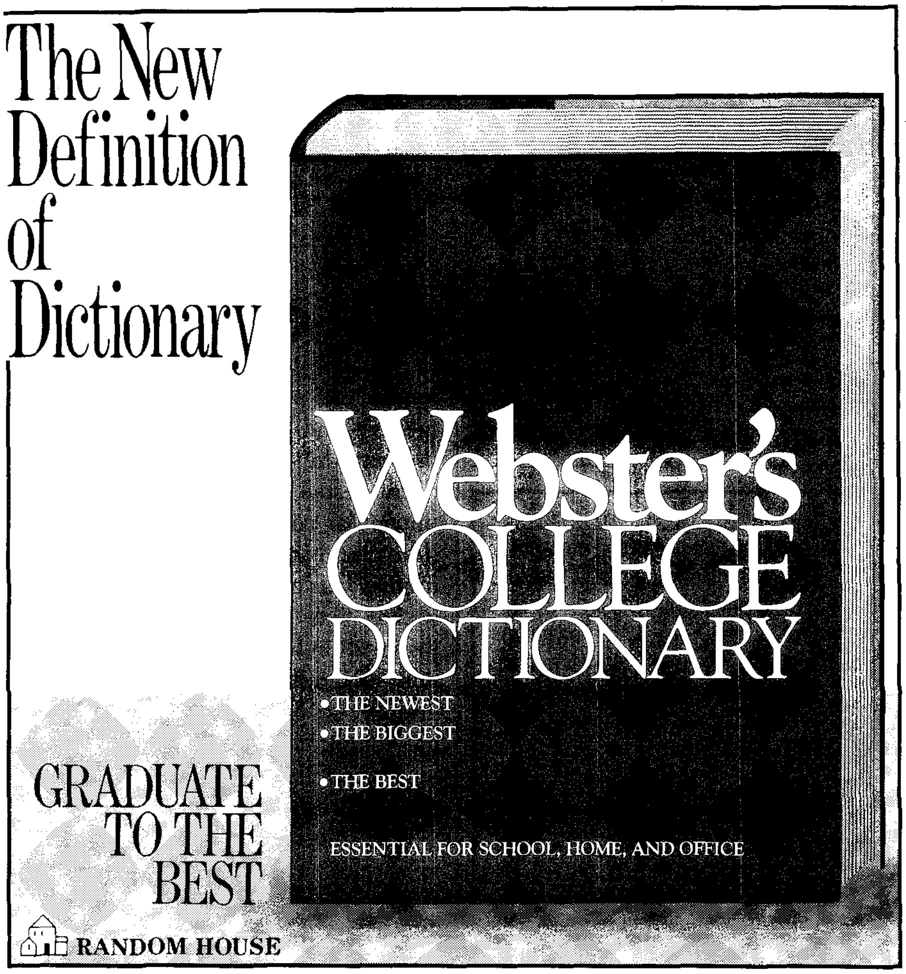
Thirty years ago, in other words, a white man lecturing to a room filled with young white men was closer to the typical than to the anomalous classroom scene. Isn't it possible that, even assuming all the good will in the world (and there is, in the great majority of cases, no good reason not to assume it), what was taught and how it was talked about did not reflect the interests and perspectives of the people who were not there? Anyone who has taught "Huckleberry Finn" to a class in which all the students were white and then taught it to a class in which some of the students were black knows that the second experience is a different and more demanding one than the first. This is not because "Huckleberry Finn" is a racist book; it's because it *isn't* a racist book. If you teach "Huckleberry Finn" as (among much else) a lesson to white Americans about how to understand black Americans, you are not teaching the book to black students. Black students have things to learn from "Huckleberry Finn," but how to understand black Americans is not one of them, and a professor who persists in teaching the book as though it could be read the same way by everyone is a professor who has ceased to learn from his or her students.

THE transformation of the American academy began in a serious way only about twenty years ago, when traditionally male colleges (like Dartmouth and Princeton) began admitting women, and when predominantly white colleges (Harvard, for example) began going out of their way to recruit black students. It was, naturally, important to college administrators to make these "nontraditional" students feel welcome in a subculture that had got along rather comfortably for several centuries without them; and that is why publications like *The Dartmouth Review* and Princeton's *Prospect*, which did everything they could to make the new students feel unwanted, were so provoking to administrators. It's also why the editors of those journals found that a gratifying feeling of being persecuted for their beliefs could be bought very cheap—simply by printing an ugly photograph or an off-the-shelf ethnic slur. Still, the resistance, despite its bitterness, was negligible; and it is remarkable how thorough the transformation, accomplished within the span of a single generation, has been. Today, about fifty-five per cent of college students are women, and almost twenty per cent are nonwhite or Hispanic. College enrollment has risen from three million six hundred thousand in 1960, when twenty per cent of college-age Americans attended, to about fourteen million today, when thirty per cent attend. "White men" are just one of many minorities on most American campuses.

In order to achieve "diversity," as it's called ("genuine unity" would be a happier, and more accurate, expression), colleges adopted "affirmative action" procedures in admissions and hiring practices, and it is against "affirmative action," more than anything else, that D'Souza's attack is directed. What an affirmative-action policy generally requires is that an employer, or an admissions office, "cast the widest net"—that it make a good-faith effort to include in the pool of candidates all qualified persons, regardless of race and sex (and, usually, various other characteristics that we have decided to regard as "accidental," such as "Vietnam-veteran status").

"Affirmative action" can also mean, however, adopting a policy of proportional hiring or admissions, and adjusting standards for each group in order to arrive, over a period of years, at the wished-for result. This second type of affirmative-action policy is what D'Souza has in mind when he uses the term, and, for obvious polemical reasons, he does not trouble to distinguish it from the first. His error in trying to analyze this second kind of affirmative action is, again, a historical one, for he imagines a past in which colleges admitted students only on academic merit, and in which academic merit was defined entirely by impersonal measures, such as grade-point averages and scores on college-board examinations. But, of course, the most selective colleges in the country have always given preference to applicants who were skilled at running with a football or rowing a shell, and to the children of alumni, local officials, big donors, and anyone else whose good opinion they cherished. They have always tried to come up with a desirable mixture of public- and private-school graduates, and with a balanced geographical distribution. The educational rationale for those policies seems far more dubious than the rationale of trying to achieve a more egalitarian ethnic mixture; but no one ever wrote a book to complain about it.

The present threat to the new academic culture comes, as D'Souza correctly perceives, from the academic left. The transformation of the American university has led to a rethinking of the content of the traditional liberal-arts education, and the left has seized upon this circumstance to peddle the notion that all traditional teaching is



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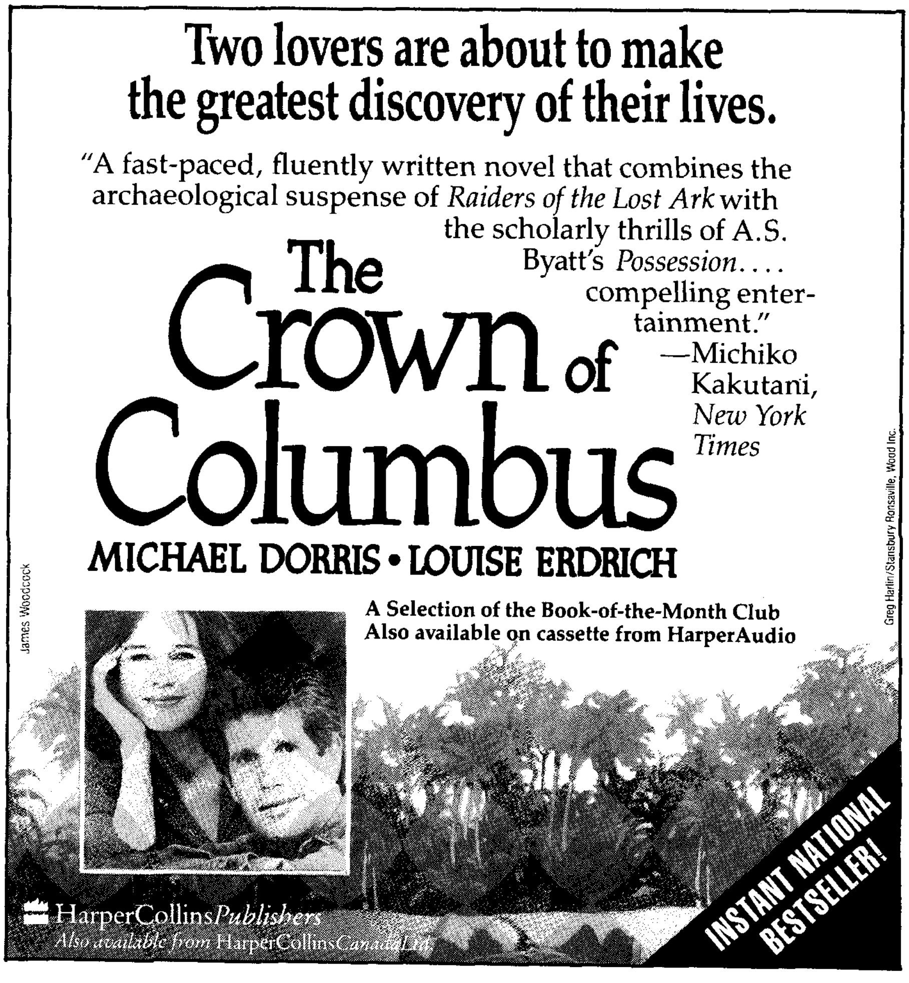

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corrupted by racism and sexism. The intense desire of college presidents and deans to avoid any suggestion that their campuses are inhospitable to black or Hispanic or women students—or, in today's franker sexual environment, to gay students—has led them down a path of collaboration with faculty who have a more divisive political agenda at heart. The charge of "harassment" has thus become, in a patently authoritarian style, a way to prevent the expression of politically unpopular comments—and even, in some cases, to prevent the teaching, in a perfectly disinterested way, of the politically unpopular comments of someone else. The claim that in the past intellectual inquiry was compromised by racial and sexual bias has become the explicit justification for compromising the freedom of intellectual inquiry today. Literature, in particular, is being taught as though it were only political medicine or political poison—a view that is not *only illiberal but illiterate.*

The most pernicious aspect of the new campus "politics of race and sex" is not the assault on Western culture, which ought to be able to survive the contempt of a few professors who think they have a better idea (and which should never have been thought of as the special property of professors in the first place). What is destructive—and here, again, D'Souza makes the right point, though when one recalls his earlier callousness one has to work hard to credit his sincerity—is the self-conception it teaches to female students, black students, gay students, and other formerly "excluded" parties. Having sensibly decided that we were wrong in believing that a person's race and sex are the least important things about him or her, we have now apparently concluded that they must be the only important things. Words that ought to be adjectives—black, white, male, female, homosexual, heterosexual—have been made into substantives. But the culture in which our identities take shape—especially, of all places, in America—is promiscuously heterosexual and homosexual, black and white, male and female. It ought to be *possible to learn about it without having* to continue to pretend that everyone is in every respect only one thing or the other.

The conditions that made it difficult for black Americans to enter the academy and that for so long made it difficult for women to have professional careers are not the fault of our grammar, of course. Milton is not responsible for the historical subjugation of women—only an English professor would believe otherwise—and finding a more politically enlightened way of teaching "Paradise Lost" is not going to solve problems that are social and economic, rather than literary, in nature. Professors in the humanities who search for progressive—or what are called "interventionist"—ways of reading literature have essentially adopted the premise of every television drama ever made about a social problem, which is that the problem would disappear if only there were a little more understanding and everyone had a better attitude.

D'SOUZA is conspicuously oblivious of the circumstances that help to determine educational performance—poverty, the quality of public educa*tion, the drug culture, inadequate* housing, and all the other conditions the domestic-policy analysts of the Reagan Administration seem to have believed would go away if the people who suffered under them would only take themselves a little more firmly in hand and exercise some self-discipline. He is so determined to leave such matters out of his account, in fact, that he comes very close to suggesting, in his final chapter, that black students as a group perform poorly on standardized tests because they are intellectually inferior to white and Asian students. "Feminists," he claims, in a typically alarmist and baseless assertion, "want to replace alleged sexists like Aquinas and Milton with Simone de Beauvoir and Gloria Steinem," and "minority activists" want to perform a similar operation on the curriculum in the hope that they will perform better if the reading list is more culturally congenial. "Yet this does not eliminate group differences; it merely renders them invisible," D'Souza warns. One expects this statement to be qualified by the admission that something accounts for "group differences" other than the inherent abilities of the members of the groups, but the qualification never comes. Still, in leaving real social conditions out of the picture, D'Souza is only engaging the issue on the level at which many of his academic opponents have already placed it. Academic activists may think otherwise, but conservatives like D'Souza would love to debate curriculum reform with them forever, because changing the curriculum is the cheapest social program ever devised.

The academic obsession with racial and sexual politics that "Illiberal Education" describes may already have peaked. The Asian-American student who threatened to sue Berkeley was admitted, and the university agreed to alter its admissions procedures so that Asian-American applicants are not discriminated against. A federal judge has thrown out, as a violation of the First Amendment, the University of Michigan's code censoring unacceptable expressions. And Derek Bok, the president of Harvard, announced recently that the university will not make any efforts to punish offensive speech. Still, the American university has embarrassed itself, and it is managing to reduce a marvellous social achievement into fodder for a group of academics who have persuaded themselves that the banal slogan "Everything is political" is an excuse for teaching and writing with blatantly political intentions.

It is not pleasant to see a man who did so much to poison the wells now turning up dressed as the water commissioner, and it will be apparent to most people who read "Illiberal Education" that the book's promise of balance is a false one. For D'Souza is as committed to having his facts support his convictions as are any of the academic politicians he inveighs against. He is capable of arguing that weighting college-board scores discriminates against Asian-American applicants, and then complaining that setting a high standard on the verbal-aptitude test is unfair to Asian-Americans because their English-language skills are likely to be poorer than other applicants'. He suggests that the number of racial incidents on college campuses has escalated in the last several years (evidence, he claims, of justifiable resentment over affirmative-action inequities), and then acknowledges, some pages later, that a spokesman for the Department of Education reports no increase in the number of documented campus racial incidents since 1980. He points to a black professor at the City College of New York who teaches that blacks are racially superior to whites, but fails to mention (though one of the sources he cites discusses both cases) that there is also a white professor at City College who has written articles for academic journals claiming that whites are intellectually superior to blacks.

D'Souza would have had better luck persuading us that his position on the issues he raises is indeed "more mature" than it was in his student days had he found a single example of a curriculum that has become more enlightening, or a field of study whose scope has been broadened, or a student whose life has been made better because of the changes that have occurred in higher education since 1960. But he makes every case illustrate the same claim—that the social transformation of the American college has been a failure. It is not a failure yet; but unless some good will and some faith in the value of uninhibited intellectual inquiry are restored, it is hard not to believe that the contemporary academy will end up alienating even those who genuinely wish it well.

—Louis Menand

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Wartime Lies, by Louis Begley (Knopf; $19). The only child in a family of landed Galician Jews, motherless Maciek is a difficult, much loved boy, his every need and want the subject of great discussion. Then the Nazis invade eastern Poland, his father must evacuate with the retreating Russians, and Maciek and his Aunt Tania are forced into hiding. A beautiful and indomitable protector, Tania keeps them constantly in disguise and on the move, from apartments recently vacated by doomed Jews, and city basements under bombardment, to a farm deep in the countryside; miraculously, they manage to remain in the eye of the ever-shifting maelstrom of wartime Poland while their entire world is destroyed. This novel-as-memoir records Maciek's metamorphosis into a boy who recites his catechism flawlessly—who can watch the Warsaw ghetto burn from his boarding-house rooftop without disturbing the festive mood of those around him, and listen to the Gestapo question Tania from his hiding place with a vial of cyanide ready in his hand. Here is the tormenting riddle of Maciek's survival: only through the strenuous

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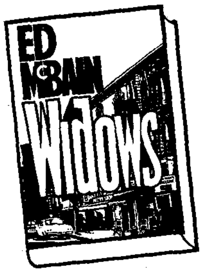

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denial of his own identity can he challenge the denial of his right to exist. The man's memoir registers the shame and despair exacted by the boy's courageous, crippling performance.

LADY'S MAID, by Margaret Forster (Doubleday; $19.95). Without the tremulous aid of Lily Wilson, the lady's maid of the title, Elizabeth Barrett's elopement with Robert Browning would have been impossible. Finding a dearth of evidence about Wilson's life while writing a biography of Barrett, Ms. Forster undertook this historical novel. The extremely readable result is more than a set piece. The author's sense of the nineteenth century seems innate, and although Browning is a stick figure, Miss Elizabeth is a trying mixture of breathy valetudinarianism and monstrous self-absorption. Wilson's tenure—which lasted, with a few cruel breaks, until her mistress's death—is composed of equal measures of virtual slavery and obsessive devotion. Both her tiny efforts and her gigantic sacrifices are recorded: she minces the chicken breast for Barrett's insufferable dog, Flush, but she is not allowed by the Brownings to have her children with her in service. The letters Wilson writes home are especially good, but readers may find that continual scenes of hair-brushing and pillow-plumping make the whole too long.

GENERAL

YOU'VE HAD YOUR TIME: THE SECOND PART OF THE CONFESSIONS, by Anthony Burgess (Grove Weidenfeld; $23.50). This installment of an unfolding autobiography begins with the author's return to England from a colonial outpost in 1959, and the pronouncement from his doctors that he has less than a year to live. He is broke, and has an alcoholic wife and no prospects. So, being who he is, he resolves to make money for his widow-to-be by writing, and, during the next twenty-odd years, produces novels, plays, film scripts, and learned essays on language, along with musical compositions and librettos for London and Broadway shows. Also in these years his wife dies, and her place is taken by an Italian academic (who has already borne Burgess a son); there is ceaseless travel and domestic resettlement, and the noise and activity attendant upon celebrity, which comes to Burgess with the success of "A Clockwork Orange." The writing throughout is rich in sight and sound, in things and people seen and pondered. Burgess is uninhibited in dealing with his contemporaries, but never malicious; he discusses his private life with candor but not in an exhibitionistic way; and his style is erudite and humorous and energetic.

THE END OF LAISSEZ-FAIRE: NATIONAL PURPOSE AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY AFTER THE COLD WAR, by Robert Kuttner (Knopf; $22.95). A work of economic theory and a tract for the times, this sensible volume is both lucid and moderate. Mr. Kuttner believes that the United States has pursued a "utopian" policy of free trade, or international laissez-faire, while our trading partners have been protecting their own enterprises and entrepreneurs. He provides an impressive historical perspective that sees several sources of our present comparative economic decline, among them our insistence on making the dollar in effect the world's reserve currency at the end of the Second World War, our preoccupation with the Cold War, and periods of sheer economic unreason, like the Reagan Presidency. Mr. Kuttner's own suggestions don't reduce to catchwords but are a complex of specific policies that seek government intervention in a mixed economy, to promote domestic growth, and a coöperative international trading and financial order.

NOTE: Pauline Kael's "5001 Nights at the Movies" (Holt; $22.50, paper) has been expanded to include eight hundred new reviews. Most of the contents first appeared in *The New Yorker's* Goings On About Town department.

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Fifty Nifty United States . . . Georgia On My Mind . . . Carry Me Back to Old Virginity . . . and I Love Arizona are just a few of the patriotic state and country songs Phoenix Country Day School students dazzled their grandparents with on the school's annual Grandparent's Day Celebration.—*Paradise Valley (Ariz.) Independent.*

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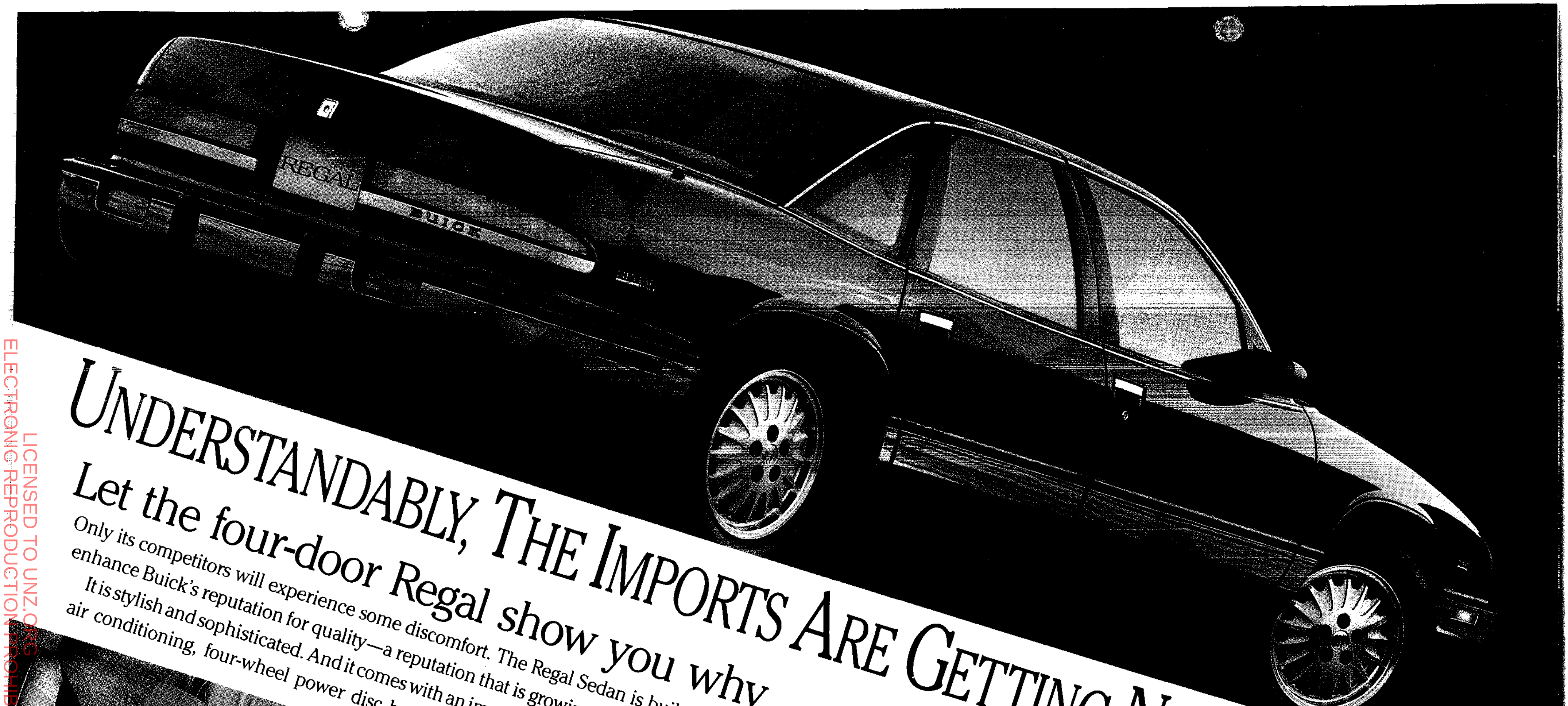

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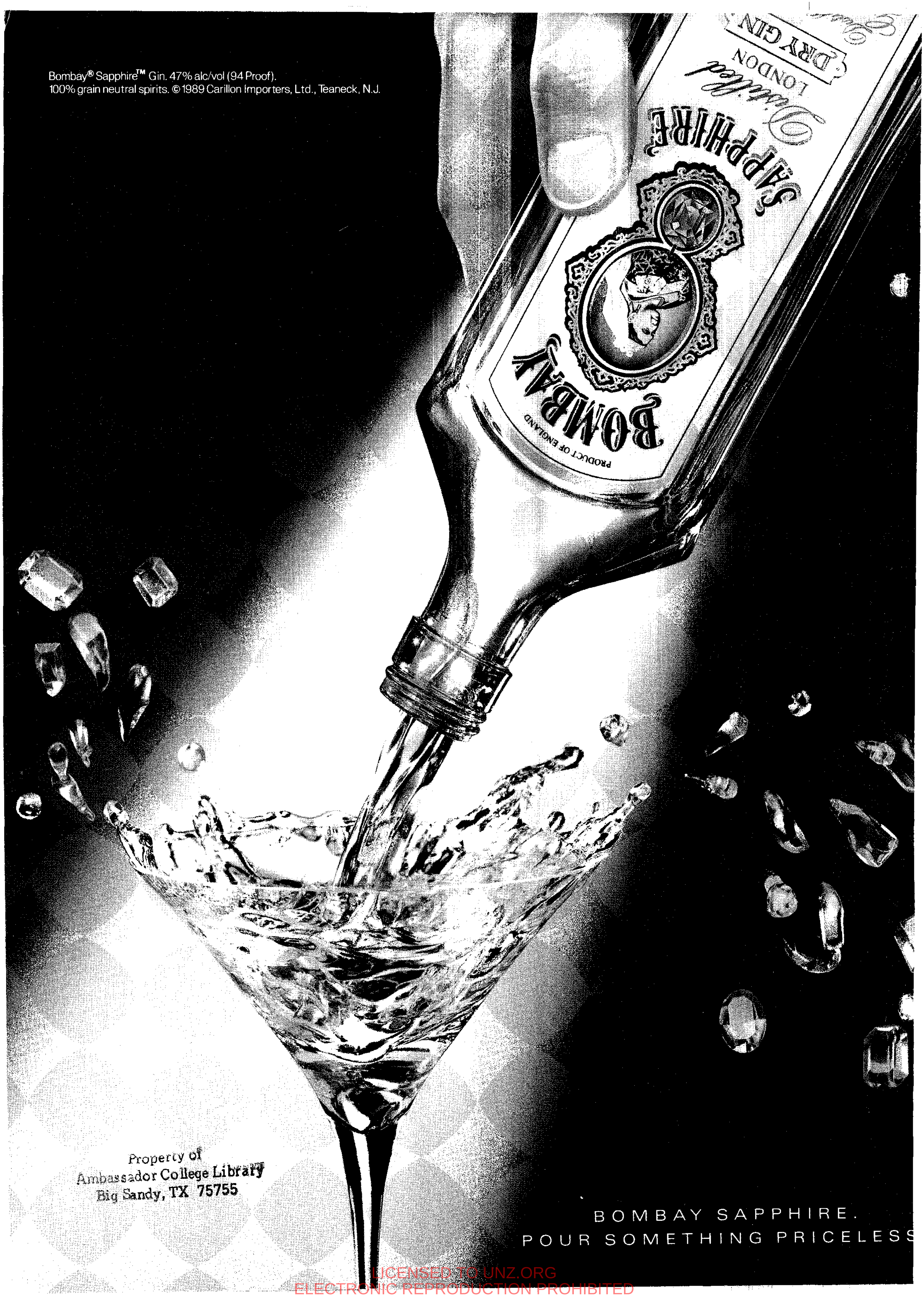
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